First Call for Children

'The essential needs of children should be given priority in bad times as well as good' — *Plan of Action, World Summit for Children*

# Preparing for their future

UNICEF-ABIDJAN/SCHYTTE

On any scale, the needs of Africa's children are great. In November, countries will gather at a major conference in Dakar, Senegal, convened by the Organization of African Unity, to try to find ways to help meet those needs. There they will hear how Africa is planning to reach the goals of the World Summit for Children, and learn what the continent has already achieved.

It is some of those efforts and victories that this issue of ***First Call for Children*** highlights:

- Djibril Diallo, in 'Viewpoint', recounts the events and excitement of the Day of the African Child this year, as a lead-up to the International Conference on Assistance to African Children to be held on 25-27 November in Dakar... p. 3;
- More evidence is showing that the Bamako Initiative is succeeding in creating a new foundation for basic health care in Africa... p. 1;
- In Senegal, the Convention on the Rights of the Child sparked innovative reforms in Koranic schools... p. 8;
- In Niger, a promising project is helping reclaim land from the desert and improving food production... p. 3;
- 'Research Digest' summarizes an Innocenti Occasional Paper on Africa's economic problems and the inability of stabilization and structural adjustment programmes to correct them .. p. 11.

ALSO IN THIS ISSUE:

- Reports on Iraq, Tigray and Somalia describe how the hidden wounds of war affect children, and the projects that help the healing... p. 6 & 7;
- Many countries have blueprints to a better future for their children ready, as this progress report on national programmes of action finds... p. 1;
- Health messages can accentuate the positive when discussing disabilties... p. 8;
- Education in Cambodia faces many challenges.. p. 4;
- Papermaking, an old skill in Nepal, is helping community development... p. 11;
- The International Children's Day of Broadcasting aims to give children their day on the air... p. 5.

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# First Call for Children

'The essential needs of children should be given priority in bad times as well as good' — *Plan of Action, World Summit for Children*

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**Mothers and children attend a health clinic in Kenya, one of the 18 countries implementing the Bamako Initiative.**

EFFORTS SHOW PROMISE

## Bamako Initiative changes the face of health care in Africa

**By Patricia Lone**

In Africa, where deteriorating clinics, discouraged health care workers and desperate patients have multiplied during the profound economic crisis of the 1980s, the statistics are bleak. Almost half the continent has no access to basic care. The ratio of health facilities to people is estimated at no more than 1:10,000. The per capita expenditure on health on the continent is $1.45.

However, despite such figures, hope and change have arrived for approximately 20 million people in the 18 countries implementing the Bamako Initiative.

**Taking the Initiative**

Proposed just five years ago at the World Health Organization (WHO) Regional Committee meeting attended by African Ministers of Health in Bamako, Mali in 1987, the Initiative has a clear and simple aim. It is to make the goal of basic health care a reality for communities, and particularly for children and women, through easily accessible, well-stocked health centres that are locally managed and financed. A number of health services across the continent are showing signs of the Initiative's success.

Guinea, one of the most outstanding examples, has implemented the Bamako Initiative in 36 of its 38 districts, reviving an almost totally moribund health system. More than 400 health workers are being trained in areas such as the control of diarrhoeal disease and service and drug management. Apart from a dramatic increase in Guinea in curative care since 1988, two specific positive results from the improvements in health services, according to recent data, are that more women are remaining in antenatal care and the level of tetanus toxoid immunization is higher.

In Kenya, the Initiative is operative in 8 of 43 districts, and evaluations indicate that popular support and demand are high. A major area of success is the positive community response to the insecticide-treated mosquito nets introduced by community health workers and available at low cost.

Among other indications of success from implementing countries are improved health care service use in Ghana and invigorated community participation in Nigeria.

**Decentralizing health and development**

As the economic crisis stripped resources from African government budgets throughout the 1980s, it became clear that peripheral health centres — potentially the most cost-efficient care — would need user financing to survive.

The idea of people paying for health care certainly wasn't new: many already spent considerable amounts for private treatments and drugs. Furthermore, some studies had shown that users tended to value services more highly when they paid for them, assuming that a certain level of quality of care was maintained.

However, one worry was that user costs for health services would mean poor people would be excluded. Up to now, however, data indicate that this has not happened, largely because the cost of care, including the generic drugs used, is low enough for most people to afford. Community solidarity also protects the few who cannot pay.

More generally, it was recognized that communities couldn't possibly assume all financial responsibility for their health services. The goal instead has been to forge a strong partnership between communities and governments, with people paying a proportion of costs and retaining the

**continued on page 2**

## Countries making progress in plans for children

**By John V. H. Dippel**

The child survival and development goals set by the 1990 World Summit for Children have sparked a quiet revolution.

Around the world, committed governments at the local, municipal and national levels, and concerned individuals and NGOs have affirmed their commitment to meet — and in some cases surpass — the Summit's ambitious targets during this decade.

Thus far, 133 countries have prepared, or are in the process of preparing, national programmes of action (NPAs) that outline strategies for achieving these goals. Virtually all NPAs are expected to be completed by the end of this year.

This response, one of the broadest ever made to an international gathering, reflects a new and significant stage in nations' commitment to the concerns of children.

"The willingness of governments to adopt the Summit goals as part of their national agendas means they are no longer going to be implementing a limited number of programmes specifically targeted at children, but instead addressing the well-being of children as part of a broad plan for national growth and development," said Robert Ledogar, Senior Planning Officer in UNICEF New York. At the same time, 86 of 109 developing countries reporting to date have indicated their intention to incorporate Summit goals into their national development plans as well.

The seriousness with which national governments are taking their commitment to the Summit's Plan of Action is also reflected in the level of leadership responsible for overall coordination of the NPAs. For example, in Bolivia, China, Ecuador, Malaysia, Niger, the Philippines, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Thailand and Uruguay the responsibility rests with the office of the President or Prime Minister.

Countries in the Latin America and the Caribbean region have made the most rapid progress in developing NPAs. Virtually all of the 33 countries in this part of the world have NPAs in final form.

**How NPAs are being prepared**

In some 50 countries, governments set up multisectoral task forces comprising

**continued on page 3**

**NPA Fact Box**

√ NPA stands for 'national programme of action'. This is the development strategy that countries create to carry out the child survival and development goals set at the World Summit for Children, held in New York in September 1990.

√ 136 countries have committed themselves to the Summit goals, as of March 1992.

√ 133 countries are known to be preparing NPAs.

√ 35 NPAs have been finalized to date.

## Success in Côte d'Ivoire

**By Julia Spry-Leverton**

In the clinic these days the big difference is the box. Carefully crafted out of local timber, it was designed with different sized compartments, places for such basic necessities as aspirin, anti-malarial drugs, dressings and bandages, and a stethoscope.

To the people of Djiasso, a village in the east of the Côte d'Ivoire, the box seemed to represent all their hopes in having a clinic of their own. They wouldn't have to make the long journey to town when illness struck; they would be treated by one of their own people — a trained volunteer health worker.

Many times in the past, though, the promise of the box was not fulfilled: its compartments were empty. All the health worker, Claude Amah, could do was shake his head sadly when he had to tell those who often had waited long and patiently, first outside in the sun and then on the benches inside, that there were no drugs left to treat their illness.

Now, however, Claude returns on the bus from the regional hospital in Adzope with his arms full of packages. The shelves of the clinic, once so often empty, are well stocked. The changes are the result of a new procurement system set in place under the auspices of the Bamako Initiative.

Rural communities all over Côte d'Ivoire are seeing such differences since the Ministry of Health, with UNICEF support, devised a method of cost-recovery for essential drugs.

Before, the country faced frequent cash flow problems in paying for drug shipments. Now, with communities contributing to the costs of their own health care, there is money up front to secure bulk supplies. As a result, unit prices for drugs are much lower too, so the consumer at village level feels a direct benefit. Because the cost of drugs is so much lower, people can afford treatment more often, and complete drug courses where repeat prescriptions are required.

At Djiasso, Claude makes it a point to reassure people that regular drug supplies will be available and explains how their payments at the clinic are used. A proportion covers the actual cost of the drugs, some goes to buy new supplies, and a proportion is for administration. The rest is for the clinic and in Djiasso some improvements to the building are being planned.

As for the box, it sits proudly in the clinic now with no space to spare in its tightly packed compartments.

*Julia Spry-Leverton is a consultant writer for UNICEF who travelled recently to Côte d'Ivoire and Guinea-Bissau.*

UNICEF/6641/NARDIN

**Children and women are important beneficiaries of the Initiative. Communities that manage their own health centres develop crucial knowledge about diseases affecting their families and what is needed to treat them.**

BAMAKO INITIATIVE

# Care improving as communities get involved

**continued from page 1**

funds — and management authority — locally to resupply essential drugs, cover operating costs and, in many cases, pay incentives to poorly paid health workers.

The Bamako Initiative thus can become a force for community empowerment and capacity-building, as people confront and solve problems such as cost control and drug availability and make decisions about their priorities. Eventually such community autonomy can be a strong impetus to overall development.

**Local information base growing**

Along with such capacity-building, the Bamako Initiative is also stimulating the collection of vital information about disease patterns, drug use and health costs that will lead eventually to better planning at the national and international level.

For example, studies in Mauritania show the substantial difference between the cost of an average consultation with a community health worker (about $0.55) and the average cost for a person to travel to and be treated at a health centre (around $14.75). Even though some people will still need treatment at health centres, having a well-trained health worker in a village with a small stock of drugs could help save up to $30 per family per year on health costs.

More broadly, a community's knowledge of what diseases are harming its children is, quite literally, invaluable. Data show that approximately 4 million children under five die in sub-Saharan Africa every year, primarily from malaria, diarrhoeal diseases and acute respiratory infections.

A local community, aware of such health vulnerabilities, able to influence decisions on the basic health care it needs to protect its members and in control of the money to cover key purchases and costs, is without doubt a healthier, happier place for all its people.

*Patricia Lone is Editor of* **First Call for Children.**

## *Implementing the Initiative in Guinea-Bissau*

**By Julia Spry-Leverton**

The Bamako Initiative has come to the remote rural region of Gabu in Guinea-Bissau, ensuring availability of one of the most primary ingredients of primary health care: the drugs to treat the most common diseases in the region.

The Ministry of Health has introduced the Initiative with UNICEF support. In an area where malaria and diarrhoeal disease together are responsible for 22 per cent of deaths in children under five, according to the latest available figures, supplies of anti-malarial drugs and oral rehydration salts are top priorities.

Under the new system, community health centres pay for bulk supplies of drugs by levying charges from the community members. Bulk purchases keep costs of drugs at only a fraction of the price charged in private sector pharmacies.

The result is better physical as well as fiscal health: because a villager can afford the drugs prescribed, he or she attends the clinic more frequently and follows the full course of treatment. And rural clinics receive income that goes towards repairs or improvements.

Alberto Zamberletti is the coordinator of Gruppo Voluntariato Civile, an Italian NGO that has helped set up the network of community health centres in the Gabu region. Mr. Zamberletti says that he detects increased confidence in the local community about achieving their own health goals: "The pre-conditions for sustainability are taking place before our eyes."

# The desert and development in Niger

**By U.B. Lindstrom**

You do not need to spend long in Niger before you realize that everything revolves around water.

Rain is the number one item of news on the radio and in the press. People talk about nothing else as they pray for ponds where children can splash about and swim.

This is my third visit, it is mid-May 1991 and it is raining heavily, although the rains are not due to start until June. Everywhere you see men, women and children hoeing the fields and planting millet.

We are received by the people of Niger on all sides with enthusiasm as the bringers of the rain. "Stay for a while in the Sahel and travel all over," is the cheery cry we hear.

**Taking back the desert**

The government official responsible for water and afforestation projects is Issaka Ounteini. He is young and energetic, luckily, because his work is demanding.

In Niger, the stand of trees has disappeared and food production, primarily millet, has declined. Wide areas of land are desert and people have migrated to the towns and cities.

Official estimates are that grain shortfall will be in the region of 300,000 tonnes. Smallholders have very little seed and it is feared that, unless rainfall is plentiful, the country will face famine this year.

In the face of such challenges, the priorities emerge: reclaim areas lost to the desert, plant hardy trees and exploit rain water as efficiently as possible.

Issaka Ounteini knows, however, that without the participation of local people, no progress can be made.

**People-powered development**

I am standing at the edge of about 20 hectares of lush acacia bushes in the southern department of Tahoua. The trees represent a significant victory over the desert. They also reflect the wisdom of the Government's policy of decentralized decision-making and the power of determined villagers.

Only because everyone in the village took full responsibility for the survival of the seedlings and the storage of rain water are the 20 hectares thriving.

The hardy acacia is a part of the answer to the advance of the desert. Crescent-shaped barriers of stone and sand are built around the trees to trap rain water. Topsoil gradually collects around the seedlings and thus creates favourable conditions for the cultivation of millet. When the trees reach a certain age and height, millet is planted around them. And because the acacia fixes nitrogen in the soil, the millet yield is boosted by 15 to 20 per cent.

Yet the acacia is very vulnerable in its early growth: goats and other domestic animals eat the tender seedlings. As Issaka Ounteini explains, fencing is the best protection, "but this was too expensive and neither the Government nor the local people had the necessary funds."

The people's vigilance and sense of ownership saved the young acacias. Seldom have I seen such persevering men and women doing their level best to improve their own living environment.

*U.B. Lindstrom, Executive Secretary of the Finnish Committee for UNICEF, has a background in agricultural science.*

# VIEWPOINT

# A message of hope from Africa

**By Djibril Diallo, Chief of Public Participation Section, UNICEF New York**

*June 16 of every year is appropriately dedicated to the memory of African children who were massacred in Soweto, South Africa, on that day in 1976, which will remain one of the severest indictments of the apartheid system in South Africa.*

*For independent Africa, however, since 1991 the date also marks the Day of the African Child, which is a day of serene reflection and sober reckoning, as Africa looks back to see "where the rain began to beat her children." It is an opportunity to celebrate the continent's future that is manifestly present in her children, and to embrace anew the cause of children in Africa — and everywhere.*

The celebrations for this year's Day of the Africa Child centred on two major goals: to accelerate preparation in Africa of national programmes of action (NPAs) for children and to refocus attention around the world on a continent whose needs grow more immense every day.

The Day received a special boost this year through close cooperation with the Secretariat of the Organization of African Unity (OAU), the continent's umbrella political organization. OAU Secretary-General Salim Salim made a special plea to Africans to make the most of the Day to prepare seriously for the forthcoming OAU-sponsored International Conference on Assistance to African Children, to be held on 25-27 November 1992 in Dakar, Senegal. The historic gathering is expected to work out ways of raising additional resources, from both within and outside Africa, for the attainment of the Summit goals for the 1990s.

### How the Day was spent

During the weeks leading to 16 June, children across the African continent celebrated their status in song and verse recitation, in dance and in sport.

Play was only a small part of their activity, however. The children also constituted themselves into parliaments and held solemn sessions during which they passed resolutions thanking their parents for their life, love and care; their teachers for their education; and their governments for all the services. They also implored governments and all leaders in public office to redouble their efforts to increase and improve services — particularly in the areas of health and education.

In a number of countries, at the end of these 'parliamentary sessions', the children presented copies of the outcome of their deliberations to their countries' leaders or ministers.

Co-chairing a week's celebration that started on 9 June in New York and at the United Nations, three remarkable First Ladies ensured that the message of the African child was heard: Mrs. Matilda Cuomo, wife of the Governor of New York State; Mrs. Lea Boutros-Ghali, wife of the Secretary-General of the United Nations; and Mrs. Joyce Dinkins, wife of the Mayor of New York City. Joining them were concerned citizens' organizations, such as the Harlem Task Force in New York.

### Tapping the Day's potential

Countries will continue to use the Day as a 'central switchboard' to disseminate messages on major problems and achievements, especially those with the greatest impact on children. These messages may be on AIDS and programmes for its prevention; street children and their rehabilitation; discrimination against the girl child and advocacy and education programmes targeted at laws, beliefs and prejudices in cultures where such discrimination is practised.

Or the messages could be on the all-important area of community health and public health care and the implementation of the Bamako Initiative, a system of community-managed and community-financed health care. UNICEF, the World Health Organization and their allies pride themselves on the fact that the Bamako Initiative, now in its fifth year of implementation, has proved to be one of the best guarantees for community health and among the most cost-effective health care delivery systems at the community level in Africa.

UNICEF/4638Z/BOUHAFA

**The girl child is an important focus of efforts.**

### Formal protection for children

Two international instruments guarantee and govern the welfare of Africa's children: the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child. The Day provided an opportunity for Africa to take stock of its position with regard to these instruments.

As of 16 June this year, African States had ratified the Convention in greater numbers than those of any other continent: 30 African countries had ratified the Convention, out of a total of 117 ratifying countries, and 9 had signed. The African Charter had been ratified by 2 countries and signed by 16.

During the celebration of the Day in a number of countries, children also ceremonially presented the Minister responsible for child-related affairs with a copy of the country's NPA. This document spells out in detail each country's plan for meeting its children's needs, specifically for attaining the goals set out in the Plan of Action for Implementing the World Declaration on the Survival, Protection and Development of Children in the 1990s.

The soundness of these national programmes and the strength of African governments' commitment to them will be tested in November this year, in Dakar, Senegal, during the International Conference on Assistance to African Children, which is being convened by OAU at the behest of the African heads of State. The Conference will bring together African governments, donor agencies, international finance institutions and NGOs to work out innovative and effective approaches to financing NPAs for children.

### Message of hope

The message of the Day of the African Child is a message of hope. By illustrating ways in which Africans are struggling to move the continent into recovery and development, the Day is helping to educate the proponents of 'Afro-pessimism', for whom Africa is a lost cause, and to focus attention on the many 'islands of hope'.

# NPAs show governments' commitment to reaching the Summit goals

**continued from page 1**

dozens of non-governmental, religious and community organizations. These task forces have empowered committees to draft specific proposals for the NPA.

In other countries, local groups, professional societies, women's and children's advocacy organizations, NGOs and other bodies have participated more informally.

Drafts of national programmes of action have also been prepared at the provincial and municipal levels of governments, as well as by NGOs and civic organizations.

The preparation process itself can be a form of advocacy and social mobilization on behalf of children. "It is our hope that governments will reach out to as many sectors of society as possible in preparing their NPAs, so that the entire population is made aware of what the Summit goals are and becomes committed to attaining them," said Robert Ledogar. "In this way, the documents become broad statements of principles and strategies that will hold up over time."

### Finding the funds

UNICEF has estimated that two thirds of the US$200 billion needed to reach the Summit goals will be generated by countries themselves.

One way of doing this, as envisioned in the Summit Plan of Action, is for governments to allocate a higher percentage of their development budgets to the priority areas of child survival, protection and development. So far, 31 developing countries have indicated their intention to channel additional resources towards basic education and primary health care, as well as to programmes of water/sanitation and nutrition.

Other innovative ways to raise the necessary funds, as proposed in some NPAs, include improved tax collection, new forms of taxation and more efficient collection of existing taxes; user charges and other cost-recovery mechanisms; debt swaps for social investment; improved efficiency in the public sector; and greater involvement of the private sector. However, because of the complexities of long-range budget planning, the outline of costing and financing remains unclear in many NPAs.

External assistance from industrialized nations and international organizations will also be needed for priority areas, to supplement outlays from the national governments. Resource transfers, trade liberalization and debt relief are possibilities.

Achieving the Summit goals for the 1990s will also require the commitment of other UN agencies. According to Robert Ledogar, the framework of common goals for the decade gives UNICEF, UNESCO, UNDP, WHO and UNFPA a greater degree of common purpose than they have ever had in the past.

### Monitoring is crucial

A second, critical component of carrying out the NPAs is establishing methods of monitoring progress toward their goals. First, all relevant 1990 baseline data must be collected and statistical gaps filled. With the assistance of such international bodies as the World Bank and UNFPA, in addition to bilateral assistance organizations such as USAID, the necessary monitoring mechanisms are expected to be in place by the middle of the decade.

*John V. H. Dippel is a freelance writer.*

## *Ghana's NPA: Setting an example*

The first country to ratify the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Republic of Ghana finalized its NPA in February 1992.

The NPA was prepared by a multisectoral task force, made up of representatives of the Ghana National Commission on Children, the National Council on Women and Development, the National Development Planning Commission, several government ministries and other groups.

Entitled "The Child Cannot Wait", this 118-page programme outlines a human development strategy closely linked to UNICEF goals for child survival and development in the 1990s and the UNDP human development initiative.

Among the goals it sets are: reduction of infant and under-five mortality rates by 35 per cent; reduction of female illiteracy rate by 50 per cent; and an increase of 43 per cent in access to safe water supply.

The NPA includes sectoral programmes of action for population issues; health and nutrition; education; water supply and sanitation; and advocacy programmes for children and women.

The NPA contains a cost estimate of US$421 million over the next 10 years. This is a US$233 million increase over already funded programmes, of which the Government of Ghana is committing itself to spend US$138.5 million (or 60 per cent), based on a projected annual growth rate of 3 per cent. The NPA also includes a plan to create a network of local, district, regional and national organizations to institutionalize its long-term national commitment to its children.



READEX
FICHE

# A Cambodian school shows how

**By Edgar Koh**

The contrast is striking. After travelling 75 kilometres from Phnom Penh in three spine-jangling hours along dusty, rutted roads, the visitors arrive at the school standing out like a green oasis against the parched ochre Cambodian landscape in the dry season.

Hibiscus grows along the driveway, lined today with school girls and boys in white and blue uniforms, welcoming the Education Vice-Minister and a UNICEF delegation here to open five new classrooms UNICEF helped to build.

The school field is not a playground but a garden, lush with eggplant, spring onion and cabbage — signs of life and growth in a land long burdened with death and destruction. "It's a little Versailles in the middle of a desert," observes Education Programme Officer Dario Loda, UNICEF Phnom Penh.

This is Trapeang Thom primary school in Tram Kak district, Takeo province. A new start is being made here that, if repeated throughout the country, would help give the next generation a chance at formal education war had denied to the previous generation.

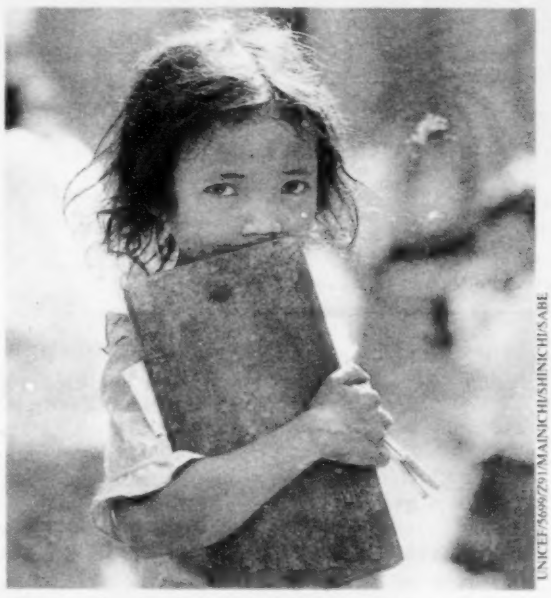
There is more to this school than its outward appearance, even given its brand new concrete-and-tile classrooms, its thriving vegetable plots and the neatness and cleanliness of its surroundings.

Against all odds the community, numbering about 5,000 people, has kept the school going through difficult times. Pillars in this effort have been the principal, the district officer and the abbot of the local temple.

There are now 610 children, 290 of them girls, enrolled in the five primary levels and taught by 24 teachers.

The teaching staff are dedicated, despite low wages (equivalent to about $5 to $7 a month throughout Cambodia), inadequate training and insufficient teaching materials. They make up for this lack with their enthusiasm and innovative methods.

As part of the curriculum, students are taught health and hygiene and how to take care of the environment. Teachers check if children wash themselves daily. Pupils are encouraged to bring to school bottles of boiled water or tea, to get into the habit of drinking only safe water. And they are taught to dispose of litter in two pails, one for non-organic items and the other for things that can be composted and used in the vegetable garden.



UNICEF/3669/291/MAINICH/SABEL

**In Cambodia, 80 per cent of primary-school-age children attend school, but there are fewer girls enrolled than boys.**

Students also participate in small animal breeding and pond fishery. Produce is sold and the proceeds shared among pupils and the school.

Teachers have demonstrated they can overcome the shortage of teaching materials by using locally available items such as cigarette boxes and bottle caps to fashion inventive teaching aids.

Students have set up a small library, in which a large blackboard records the titles of books received since 1979. The school systematically sets out to achieve quality in teaching. Teachers give slow learners extra coaching three afternoons a week. The principal and deputy principal regularly observe teachers in class, offer advice and criticism, and review the work done by students.

"We're happy that the school could perhaps serve as a model throughout Cambodia and contribute to national construction," says the principal, Moer Mony, 50. "It is harder but more desirable to motivate children than to force them to study." The school won a prize from the Prime Minister in 1989.

Trapeang Thom indeed has the potential of becoming a model for the entire country. A video in Khmer is being produced and study tours organized for other principals and teachers to learn from this school how to manage with few resources.

"The school shows that things can be done even in a poor environment without much external support but with a dynamic principal, teaching staff and district officer, and with community support," says Dario Loda.

"With goodwill, motivation, seriousness of purpose and hard work it's possible to have exciting results."

*Edgar Koh, Chief Editor of the Division of Information, UNICEF New York, visited Cambodia in late January 1992.*

## *Cambodia's education challenge*

**By Edgar Koh**

The contrast presented by Trapeang Thom primary school is also striking in another sense. While the school has been able to transcend difficult problems and give its students as good a learning environment as it can, education in Cambodia currently is in a woeful state.

The former system was destroyed along with other institutions. Grossly inadequate schemes replaced formal education as they did other social services. School buildings were razed and teachers were eliminated along with other 'intellectuals'. Few of the 40,000 pre-1979 primary school teachers survived the killing fields.

Efforts at rebuilding the system date back to 1979. The authorities adopted a mass education policy, including universal enrolment of children, and launched many literacy campaigns. Quantity was, unfortunately, achieved at the expense of quality.

The great majority of teachers hired in 1979 and 1980 were barely literate themselves. The minimum qualification was first grade, and recruits were given only three weeks' in-service training.

Still, what was achieved in the last 13 years is remarkable, given the challenging constraints, says Dario Loda, Education Programme Officer, UNICEF Phnom Penh. With some Eastern bloc technical assistance and much social mobilization effort, resources were made available to schools. Teachers were retrained. Primary and secondary school teachers are now trained in provincial teachers' training schools for one and three years respectively.

About 1.3 million children — 80 per cent of all children from 6 to 10 years of age — are enrolled in primary school, but there are notably fewer girls than boys. Overall enrolment rates are falling because of a shortage of trained teachers, textbooks and facilities and because of inadequate curriculum development, a UNESCO mission found out last year.

Many children drop out and repetition rates are among the highest in the world. About a third of all pupils in first grade discontinue schooling, and only 10 per cent reach fifth grade. It takes students an average of 10 instead of 5 years to complete fifth grade.

Drop-out rates are worsening because of economic pressures on families and the inability of the authorities to keep up with educational expenses since the cessation of Eastern bloc assistance. Falling enrolment rates, according to UNESCO, "could also be related to the changing economic environment and social structures to which the education system has yet to adapt itself."

Earning only $5 to $7 a month, if they are paid promptly at all, many teachers are going over to the private sector. They make a better and more regular income by being traders.

People now have to pay teachers and build schools themselves. There is also a shortage of facilities in mountainous areas and for minority groups. The repatriation and resettlement of 350,000 refugees and 150,000 internally displaced people — many of them of school-going age — will put additional burdens on the system.

There are no easy solutions to the complex educational problems in Cambodia's current difficult transition from war to peace, from central planning to a market economy.

UNICEF has assisted in the construction of school buildings, teachers' training, production of school textbooks and teaching materials, and the setting up of a workshop to make school furniture.

# Wiesbaden for UNICEF

***Mayor Achim Exner of Wiesbaden proposed a unique partnership between the 270,000 citizens of his city and UNICEF throughout 1991. The year-long mobilization called `Wiesbaden for UNICEF' was successful beyond all expectations, raising both funds and consciousness through more than 5,000 events, from lectures to rock concerts. DIETER POOL of the German Committee tells the story.***

Visitors arriving in Wiesbaden in 1991 could be forgiven for thinking they had somehow reached a totally different destination called 'UNICEF'. Banners at the city's train stations announced UNICEF, the town hall was decorated with the UNICEF flag and all over town innumerable posters for various events carried the UNICEF logo.

It was 'Wiesbaden for UNICEF' year, an action proposed by Mayor Achim Exner as a way for the people of Wiesbaden to learn about and contribute to the work of UNICEF. The budget for the effort was limited but the goal was ambitious: to raise 270,000 German marks*, exactly one mark per inhabitant, for UNICEF.

The people embraced the effort with the energy reflected in the city's motto — 'Resourcefulness and Commitment'. At year's end, it was clear they had outdone themselves. At the closing ceremony on December 13, UNICEF Goodwill Ambassador Audrey Hepburn accepted the city's cheque on behalf of UNICEF. It was for 2.1 million German marks, eight times the amount initially proposed.

**Information breakthrough**

Until the year-long campaign, many of Wiesbaden's citizens knew UNICEF only as an institution that made moving televised appeals for assistance during times of emergency.

However, through the numerous information activities at schools and local institutions, people learned about UNICEF's ongoing development work. And the more people learned, the more they were willing to dig into their pockets to help the children of the world.

Close contacts with the press in the early months of the effort were essential to success. Newspapers gave almost daily coverage to events — 5,000 in all were organized — and also reported on UNICEF-assisted projects in developing countries.

For instance, one weekly which is distributed free to a wide readership created a special column on its front page in each edition informing readers about UNICEF projects such as the Cheli Beti classes in Nepal and the assistance for street children in Brazil.

**UNICEF fever**

The partnership of Wiesbaden and UNICEF was initiated by the Mayor, local cultural and sports celebrities, the media and leading politicians and business representatives. And, largely due to excellent information work, the entire city was enthusiastic. Mayor Achim Exner's diagnosis was that the city had caught "UNICEF fever".

The events which took place during the year included a tournament organized by a bowling club, a jubilee for UNICEF which a pub held for invited guests, and a competition organized by local photography shops of photographs showing scenes with children. School classes painted, the armed forces orchestra marched and rock musicians jammed for UNICEF.

Football fans did their part, buying tickets for a match. And a renowned annual theatre festival, a street festival and a great wine festival also dedicated their proceeds to UNICEF. Together, the Circus Roncalli and famous chef Hans-Peter Wodarz created *panem et circenses*, raising 100,000 German marks for UNICEF.

**New partners ahead**

According to Achim Exner, 'Wiesbaden for UNICEF' is just the first in a long line of partnerships between UNICEF and German towns.

This year, the 250,000 citizens of Kiel are fully involved in activities for UNICEF. Just as they did a year ago in Mayor Exner's office, inquiries and letters from club members, representatives of corporations and individuals are piling up in the office of Karl-Heinz Luckhardt, the Mayor of Kiel.

Mayor Luckhardt once had a dream. He dreamt that during Kiel's year, which coincides with Kiel's celebration of its 750th anniversary, the city raised 750,000 German marks. Four months later, Kiel had already raised more than 250,000 German marks.

Meanwhile, some Committee members dream about what would happen if all 80 million Germans ...

*Dieter Pool is the head of the Public Relations and Donations sections of the German Committee for UNICEF.*

* One German mark equals US$0.63.

# International Children's Day of Broadcasting set

**By Joyce Greene**

Broadcasters around the world are preparing to take part in a new and exciting project — the first International Children's Day of Broadcasting.

The Day, to be celebrated on or around 13 December, aims at raising awareness of children's issues by using the tremendous power of television to bring their concerns into homes all over the world.

**Making airwaves**

Already, major television networks like TBS in the U.S. and ABC of Australia are committed to celebrating the Day, while others like CBC in Canada, BBC in the U.K., RTE in Ireland, KBS of Korea and PBS and CBS/Broadcast Group in the U.S. have expressed strong support and are making plans to become involved.

For children everywhere, the benefits are clear. The International Children's Day of Broadcasting will help to inform, to educate and to plead the cause of children — thereby helping to implement the goals set by heads of State and Government at the 1990 World Summit for Children in New York.

In fact, the Declaration and Plan of Action signed by those leaders — and many others in the period since the Summit — stress the importance of communications in achieving Summit child health and development goals.

As the Summit Plan of Action urged: "All forms of social mobilization, including the effective use of the great potential of the new information and communication capacity of the world, should be marshalled to convey to all families the knowledge and skills required for dramatically improving the situation of children."

UNICEF/8866/COOPER

**The Day's goal is to give children and their concerns a special media voice and presence. Here, children in Haiti record for a school broadcast.**

There are benefits for broadcasters, too. Giving priority to children, to their problems, concerns and challenges, provides broadcasters a unique opportunity to attract and involve families worldwide.

Broadcast stations, free to celebrate the Day in any way they choose, already have plans. Some intend to set aside part of the Day to focus on children's issues. Others plan to use TV spots especially prepared by UNICEF for the Day, featuring Goodwill Ambassadors and other celebrities and focusing on the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Many intend to take a serious look at the concerns of children, either in their own country or elsewhere.

UNICEF has produced a kit for programme and news executives that highlights the major issues facing children today. The kit also gives suggestions on how broadcasters can participate, detailing formats ranging from 30-second television spots to day-long telethons for children's causes.

**Close-up on children**

The proposal for the Day sprang from a speech by UNICEF Executive Director James P. Grant to the International Council of the National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences in New York in November 1991, when he presented an award to broadcasters for their role during the 1990 World Summit for Children.

Mr. Grant said that even though broadcasters had played a major role in progress for children in recent years, much still remained to be done.

"Would it be possible," he asked, "for the television industry to pick one day, say a Sunday, when the world media would put the focus of attention on children?

"Because while I say there is a start and a turnaround on children, it's only a start. One can still argue, with more than 40,000 children still dying each day, that they are the greatest underplayed part of our society, of our moral scene ...

"Would it be possible for the television industry to take on as a special focus this concept of one day, one day in a year where you put your hand behind our children, our future?"

The response by broadcasters on the International Council to Mr. Grant's proposal has been extremely positive. UNICEF is now urging country offices and National Committees to make contact with their local television stations and ask them to participate, in order to make it a truly international event in support of children.

*Joyce Greene is a consultant working in the Radio/TV/Film Section, UNICEF New York.*

# Turning on, tuning in the Third Channel

**By Dan Jacobs**

The 'Third Channel' has been talked about and pondered since the World Conference on Education for All at Jomtien two years ago. However, if you are still trying to find out what it means, you may not be alone.

If the first two channels through which people acquire a basic education are recognized as primary education classes and literacy programmes, the Third Channel encompasses a broader, less formal approach to learning and knowledge for living for all.

As the Jomtien Declaration stated: "All available instruments and channels of information, of communications and social action could be used to help convey essential knowledge and inform and educate people on social issues." In addition to traditional means, Jomtien delegates declared, libraries, radio and other media — the Third Channel — could be mobilized to meet basic education needs of all.

**A meeting of old and new**

Frank Dall, whose eyes light up when he talks about the Third Channel, joined the Education Cluster at UNICEF as its deputy over a year ago. With his six or seven years' experience in theatre for development in Africa, he is quick to point out that traditional means of communication and interaction, such as shadow puppets, theatre, and song and dance, are every bit as important a part of the Third Channel as modern, hi-tech electronics.

A number of countries are eager to pursue the Third Channel to attain their Education for All goals, according to Dall, and there are "highly qualified and trained communicators already in the field, with years of experience, who are ready to get on with the practical problems of using the Third Channel for education."

What still needs to be clarified, he feels, is the distinction between "what we are labelling the Third Channel and what we have always traditionally done under social mobilization."

"What is needed is for us to come up with a clearer policy on how we intend to dovetail Third Channel educational activities into existing quasi-educational activities, called, until now, social mobilization."

Meanwhile, people in the field already have positive experiences to learn from, which they can adapt to meet the specific needs of their situations, he says.

Anthony Hewett, Chief of Programme Communications and Social Mobilization in UNICEF New York, reports that communicators working in every country—all national officers who know the languages, people and cultures — have learned that the most effective means of communication are interactive performances, where the audiences respond to the players and the actors stop and shout back at the audience.

Mass media is another case altogether, as Hewett points out. "One may know roughly how many people at a certain broadcasting hour are likely to be receiving certain information, and one can even try to improve reception by careful design of a message. But no one can know how many will *absorb* that information, assess it for relevance and value, and fit it into an existing and organized body of knowledge ... To all intents and purposes, therefore, Third Channel information *as education* is uncertain and mostly unmeasured, if not unmeasurable."

**Some answers and questions**

A high-powered, hi-tech conference held at UNICEF House last August explored all the various possibilities of Third Channel approaches to basic education. Heretofore unseen, unheard-of means of communicating were rolled out, and even the sophisticated participants were impressed. But the questions inevitably arise of how much these multimedia, interactive graphic displays would cost and in what century they would become available to the classroom of the remote rural village.

The conference's final report raised other questions: "With commercial control of the channels of mass communications in many countries and commercial interests determining their role in society, what are the basic approaches for exploiting their potential for public education?

"On the other hand, with most governments in developing countries exercising tight control over the communications network, especially the electronic media, how can the governments be persuaded to open up the communications channels for genuine and creative educational use rather than their use for official propaganda?

"How are the major social agenda for Third Channel activities and their particular audiences to be decided?" and "How can the learners be engaged interactively in the learning process and in practising what is learned when face-to-face communication is mostly absent?"

At the same time, the conference cited numerous successful experiences, such as the use of a variety of methods in the Caribbean for influencing better parenting, the adaptation into numerous languages and cultures of that highly successful early childhood development TV programme *Sesame Street*, and the use of public exhibitions and telecommunications for social development.

**A force for change**

Another voice heard at the conference was that of Karl-Eric Knutsson, the UNICEF Regional Director for South Asia, who warned that communications of the top-to-bottom kind would only strengthen existing inequities. Instead, the focus should be on the people and the information they need to better manage their lives. Energy from local communities must be harnessed to wage a peaceful and democratic struggle for change. The Third Channel, he said, must be directed towards new users, such as women and girls, and for activities that favour the poor, marginalized and disadvantaged, to instil confidence in them.

Frank Dall agrees: "I see the Third Channel playing a unique overarching role in helping us reach the disadvantaged, marginalized rural groups, girls and women, groups that we have traditionally focused on that are, in fact, difficult to reach by conventional means and those that often are not reached by formal education."

*Dan Jacobs is a consultant editor and writer for UNICEF in New York.*

# Bangladesh NGO honoured by UNICEF

The Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee (BRAC) received the 1992 Maurice Pate Award from UNICEF at a June ceremony during the organization's Executive Board meeting. (Named after UNICEF's first Executive Director, the Award is presented annually.)

BRAC, founded in 1972 to do relief work after Bangladesh's war of independence, has grown dramatically, with rural development, rural credit and women's health and development projects operating throughout the country.

Perhaps its most well-known efforts are those in education: in 1984 it began a project to reach children who either had never enrolled in school or who had dropped out during their first year.

Now it educates approximately 132,300 students, children of landless farmers, in its innovative schools, where drawing, dancing and playing are important daily activities. BRAC gives girls priority, and the figures are in accordance: a full 70 per cent of students are girls. All BRAC schools are free, as are all textbooks.

# Healing the hidden wounds of war

***War steals many precious things from all it touches, but its theft from children is probably the greatest. And it steals most often from those children who have the least.***

***More than 1.5 million children in poor countries have died in the past decade because of wars, according to UNICEF estimates. And for every child killed, three more have been physically wounded or disabled. Many more have been emotionally scarred.***

***"Peace," says the concluding document from a workshop UNICEF organized last year on children in armed conflict, "is the fundamental means for preventing the adverse effects of armed conflict on children."***

***It is an ideal toward which a just and moral world, confronting great new opportunities, must turn unwaveringly. Yet, it is only an ideal and not reality. While the world struggles towards it, children deserve immediate protection from the horrors of war, some of which are described on this and the facing page.***

***Children as a 'zone of peace' is a concept that offers such protection, expanding on the successes achieved through 'corridors of peace' and 'days of tranquility' in the Sudan, Lebanon and El Salvador. The Convention on the Rights of the Child is the cornerstone on which such a zone can be built, to protect children from war's destruction and bring them direct humanitarian assistance.***

***With international commitment and support for this concept, nations and organizations will be better able to help strengthen war-torn families and communities, return children to their homes and those who love them, and heal their physical and psychological wounds.***

*Article 39 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child:*

*"States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to promote physical and psychological recovery and social reintegration of a child victim of: any form of neglect, exploitation, or abuse; torture or any other form of cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment; or armed conflicts. Such recovery and reintegration shall take place in an environment which fosters the health, self-respect and dignity of the child."*

UNICEF/HQ92-0171/BUTLER

# *1. The toll on Iraq's children is high*

***In the wake of war and unrest, children and women in Iraq continue to face great need and suffering, physically and psychologically. The infant mortality rate has risen and the incidence of low birth weight (less than 2.5 kgs at birth) in infants has also increased from 5 to 12 per cent of births. One in four children are estimated to suffer from chronic malnutrition, and over 3 per cent from severe malnutrition. Gastroenteritis, diarrhoea and cholera are persistent, and during the winter many young children died of pneumonia. Some estimate that virtually all children under 15 are at some degree of risk. SAROJINI VITTACHI, head of the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) Section of UNICEF Programme Division, travelled through the country early this year, visiting hospitals and refugee camps. Here she reports on the problems and some strategies to alleviate them.***

In Saddam City, one of the poorest districts in Baghdad, the sewers overflow into the streets, and passers-by look grey and drawn. Children crowd the wards of the hospital there, many of them with the most serious symptoms of malnutrition seen in Iraq for decades, marasmus and kwashiorkor. With few supplies, the doctor can do little to help.

The situation was similarly bleak in the northern Kurdish region, where the heaviest snowfalls in 20 years blocked relief supplies, complicating the problems of widespread hunger and food shortages. More than 500,000 returned refugees depend on food from international aid agencies. Some 300,000 Kurds now live in camps and tents provided by the UN High Commissioner of Refugees (UNHCR).

For the 70,000 people in one camp, Sayed Sadeq, the winter's harshness was almost inescapable: their tents had no heat and they struggled futilely to prevent water and snow from seeping in.

Many young children suffered from pneumonia, and we were told of children who had died from cold.

Interestingly, few cases of severe malnutrition in children have been reported. Relief workers attribute this in part to the widespread practice of breastfeeding for long periods. But most children show signs of mild and moderate undernutrition.

**The need for stimulation**

Another UNHCR camp had, in contrast, dry and heated prefab shelters. Another improvement was the prefab structure that engineers from the United Kingdom had put up, to give the children a place in which to play and learn. Something in the children's eyes spoke of the need for such stimulation.

This strong need among children has also been observed in the southern Sudan, where a relief worker tells of a child, living in a camp with some 30,000 other children without families, who guarded his sole treasure and only possession — a notebook — very closely.

**DATA ON IRAQ**

| Indicators | 1990 | 1991 | Source of Data |
|---|---|---|---|
| Total population | 18.9 million | — | *SOWC 1992* |
| Population growth rate | 3.5% | — | " " |
| Children 0-4 years of age | 3.4 million | — | " " |
| IMR | 39:1,000 | 111:1,000 | Reanalysis of Harvard Study* |
| U5MR | 48:1,000 | 143:1,000 | " " |
| Low-birth-weight babies (- 2.5 Kg) | 5% | 12% | International Study Team** |
| Chronic malnutrition (stunting) | — | 22% | Reanalysis of Harvard Study* |
| Underweight children | — | 12% | " " |
| Acute malnutrition (wasting) | — | 3.4% | " " |
| Inflation rate | 30% | 150% | — |

* April 1992.
** October 1991.
— Data not available.

From May 1990 to May 1991, a threefold increase was found in the number of reported diarrhoeal cases among children under 5 years of age.
Prior to the Persian Gulf War, Iraq produced only 30 per cent of its total food requirement. Agriculture production in 1991 further declined to 30 per cent of the 1990 level.

In emergency situations, it is important to regard learning and stimulation as basic needs, perhaps as essential as food, clothing, health care and shelter.

**Psychological healing**

"I dream of the dead being brought out every day. It is real, no, it is not a film. I try not to remember." These are the words of a 10-year-old boy who lived near El Ammariya, the bomb shelter on the outskirts of Baghdad where hundreds died. A Norwegian team, including Dr. Magne Raundalen and Atle Dyregrov, interviewed children in the area to assess psychological trauma. They found fear, pessimism about the future and anxiety.

Most of the children have bottled up these emotions, telling interviewers they don't like to discuss their feelings with their mothers, as it upsets them and they wish to protect their mothers from the pain. "She cries if I bring it up."

Dr. Raundalen, at the end of his stay in Iraq, concluded, "The children showed signs of severe trauma characterized by intrusive memories ... They use a lot of mental energy to try to avoid reminders and evade overwhelming memories ... Alleviation, at least, from all these sufferings is still possible through intervention programmes that could reach large numbers of children."

UNICEF is beginning such an intervention programme, modelled after projects already undertaken in Kuwait, Mozambique and Sri Lanka *(see page 7)*. Mothers will be helped to identify the symptoms of psychological distress in their children. School teachers, health workers and other community workers will be trained to detect symptoms and help the healing process.

# 2. "Whenever I see fire"

**By Mark Thomas**

An unexploded napalm shell, drained of its deadly payload, sits in the centre of Hawzen, a once thriving market town. The shell is a grim reminder of what many residents will never be able to forget.

A little more than four years ago, the town of about 3,000 in north-central Tigray was subjected to one of the most intense aerial bombardments of Ethiopia's protracted civil war.

It was market day in Hawzen, the capital of a highland farming district noted for its seed production. With the planting season under way, farmers from up to 100 kilometres away had come to buy seeds, crowding the marketplace.

Araya Negash, then 10 years old, remembers he was in his father's shop on that June day at about 10 a.m. when two government helicopter gunships hovered into position over the town.

"I went out to look at them and they started shooting at us. One fired a rocket into our shop and it blew the roof off. They were shooting everywhere and people were trying to get under cover or get away," Araya recalls.

Then, two MiGs screamed in and dropped cluster bombs directly over the market's shops and stalls.

"There were huge explosions ... metal and stone flying everywhere. The helicopters shot at anyone who tried to run away," Araya says.

At the centre of the market was a hotel, a sturdy, two-storey building, formerly the residence of a feudal lord. Asmara Mekonnen, a 45-year-old mother of five, says dozens of children and women were sheltering there when another pair of MiGs arrived and dropped napalm bombs directly on it.

"I was in a shop across the square from the hotel and I heard this big boom. The hotel was on fire and the people inside were trapped ... I could hear them scream." For the next six hours, until darkness began to fall, wave after wave of MiGs and helicopter gunships pounded the town. As people fled outward from the carnage in the market, the planes and helicopters followed, bombing the school, health centre and other buildings where people sought shelter.

"The fires burned all night," Asmara says. "It seemed as if the whole world was on fire."

According to local and regional officials, the death toll in Hawzen topped 2,500, with town residents accounting for at least 40 per cent of those killed. Hundreds of others were maimed or wounded. Hundreds more left the bombed out remains of their houses and businesses and settled in other villages.

Teklay Gebremichal, head of Hawzen's local government unit, says the town is only now starting to recover. "It wasn't until last May (1991), when we heard that Mengistu (former Ethiopian President Mengistu Haile Mariam) was gone and his air force captured, that people felt safe enough to really start to rebuild." Many private homes have been reconstructed, while in the marketplace, where tatters of scorched clothing still lie buried beneath the rubble, masons are busy reassembling shops.

UNICEF/53992/THOMAS

**A mother comforts her child in Tigray, where fears left by war still linger.**

Town officials have staked out the boundaries for a new health centre, and a UNICEF-donated rig drilled a new well that will bring residents a steady supply of clean water. The school's roof is still missing, walls are down and there are no desks or chairs, but rocks serve as seats and students are in class. Despite all this, the fear, at least for some, remains.

"I still have bad dreams ... My children still have bad dreams," Asmara says, staring hard at the skies above Hawzen. "Whenever I see fire or hear loud noises I feel fear and I remember. I'm afraid I'll never be able to forget."

*Mark Thomas is Information Officer in UNICEF Addis Ababa.*

# 3. Identifying post-traumatic stress

"The caretakers at a shelter for orphaned and abandoned children in Monrovia (Liberia) calmly explained that during the war the children were forced on many occasions to pick up dead bodies which were dumped near the shelter and dispose of them by throwing them into the ocean. These children now suffer constant headaches and recurrent nightmares."
*(From "Exploring Healing", a paper by Dr. Esther L. Guluma, UNICEF Monrovia)*

As obvious as such horror is, its effect on those experiencing it, especially children, is often unrecognized or unacknowledged. Yet particularly for children, whose trust in the decency and morality of adult society may be shattered by their war experiences, psychological trauma can be far more devastating than physical injuries, making its identification that much more crucial.

Researchers Mona Macksoud, Atle Dyregrov and Dr. Magne Raundalen, who have worked extensively on the subject, outline criteria for identifying post-traumatic stress disorder in children, including*:

1. Persistent re-experiencing of the trauma, through disturbing intrusions of images or sounds related to it; traumatic dreams about it; traumatic play incorporating aspects of it.

2. Diminished interest in enjoyable activities, detachment from parents and friends, and avoidance of intense feelings; or greater attachment to parents or siblings (clinging behaviour).

3. Nervousness, sleep disturbances, recurrent anxiety and difficulty in concentrating on school work.

4. Loss of recently acquired developmental skills, especially among younger children; guilt feelings over surviving the event, especially among older children.

Also largely unrecognized is the toll taken on caregivers that work with deeply and/or persistently traumatized children. They may not be aware of their own grief and trauma. They need opportunities whenever possible, including at relevant workshops and conferences, to talk out and relieve their stress.

*Adapted from the paper "Traumatic War Experiences and their Effects on Children", currently in press as *International Handbook of Traumatic Stress Syndromes*, New York, Plenum Press.

# 4. Help for children traumatized by war

**KUWAIT:** The Ministries of Health and Education, with initial UNICEF support, have launched a two-pronged approach to help children traumatized by the recent war. In one effort, community-based programmes were established to help parents and teachers identify such children and to offer counselling by trained paraprofessionals.

Nearly 850 mental health paraprofessionals attended a series of training workshops, based on the material in the manual *How to Help Children Affected by War* (developed from experiences in Lebanon). Out of that number, approximately 500 were selected to conduct a series of workshops over a 10-week period for teachers, to help them understand how the war affected children, what they can do in school to alleviate behavioural problems and how to identify children with serious psychological problems for specialized follow-up.

As part of the community-based support, a series of 14 television and radio programmes are also planned to inform parents on how to help their children at home.

The second approach is for more specialized care through the Reggie Trauma Centre, recently established by the Ministry of Health to deal with adult and child psychological problems arising from the war.

**SRI LANKA:** Since 1983, Sri Lanka has been dealing with a prolonged and often bitterly violent inter-ethnic conflict. To help families and children with the associated stress, the country has developed the *Training Manual for Helping Children in Situations of Armed Conflict*. Used by many NGOs, such as Redd Barna, Sarvodaya, Save the Children (UK) and OXFAM, it gives basic information on child development and examples of the way children behave when they have been traumatized. It tries to spark discussion as well as suggesting interventions.

In another important project, specially trained volunteers identified children badly affected by violence and provided crucial help for them at home. An added benefit was that the volunteers' visits also led to the identification of other pressing health and welfare problems, to be dealt with by the Ministry of Health's regular family health workers, to whom the volunteers report.

Further targeting of children psychologically wounded by war takes place in primary health care clinics, with trauma now identified as a risk factor by health workers, who are also receiving training in counselling to meet the psychosocial need.

**PHILIPPINES:** Estimates are that 10 million Filipinos, more than half of them children, have been exposed to war in the last two decades. Although the need for services for these children is great, resources are strained and many go without the necessary treatment. At the same time, some innovative projects show great promise, perhaps the most striking being those that involve children in the arts as therapy.

One of these projects focuses especially on drama to encourage the children to express their fears. Others use drawing, painting and dance as well, to draw out from the children feelings they otherwise might never express. Physical exercises and stress reduction techniques are used also.

# 5. Tending Somalia's fresh wounds

**By Edward Girardet**

"Three quarters of the wounded are women and children," said Professor Abdullah Sheikh Hussein. This former Dean of the Faculty of Medicine in Mogadishu now heads the Emergency Health Committee, a volunteer group of Somali doctors, nurses and medical support personnel, working in the northern sector of the city. As he spoke of the war's terrible toll, a vehicle filled with armed gunmen drove up to the makeshift clinic where Professor Hussein and other Committee members tend to some of the hundreds of casualties of the fighting. It brought an injured woman, her left foot severed by a shell, the fourth casualty in 10 minutes.

Throughout the city the horror is evident, but the northern sector bears a special burden because the city's three main hospitals are all situated in the southern section of the town. The one relatively well-equipped clinic in northern Mogadishu, opened by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) in January, was closed by fighting in February and reopened only in early March.

The Emergency Committee, like others trying to assist the wounded, has had to cope with large numbers of casualties in makeshift clinics, with few supplies. Most medical supplies are flown in by UNICEF and ICRC, or are transported across the lines by vehicle. UNICEF is also equipping and helping run six new child feeding and health centres in the north. The difficulties of the airlifts, however, mean that few medicines and drips are available and virtually no blood or plasma for transfusions.

In addition, only six of the Committee's 45 health workers are doctors; the others are interns or nurses. "Many have been forced to learn on the job," Professor Hussein said, tending injuries that few medical practitioners in the West see in the course of their practice.

At the hospitals in the southern section of Mogadishu, surgical teams from Médecins sans frontières and the American International Medical Corps do the best they can. New volunteer surgeons are flown in every three or four weeks because of the difficulty in getting long-term personnel. Here, too, supplies are critically short, electric power is sporadic because of lack of fuel and, without generators to run the pumps, there is often no water.

Cholera outbreaks are feared, with the threat of contamination heightened by the numerous shallow graves that border most Mogadishu streets and empty lots, and by poor sanitation and the rupture of the sewage system.

Tens of thousands of displaced persons struggling to survive have little food and water. Surveys by ICRC and Save the Children (UK) indicate extremely high child malnutrition levels in the Gedo region and in the camps for the displaced around the capital. Within the next several months an estimated 4.5 million Somalis could face famine conditions — like those experienced in Ethiopia — unless current trends are reversed and a more effective relief programme is undertaken.

*Edward Girardet is a Belgian journalist who travelled to Somalia early this year.*

# The Convention comes to Diourbel

By Julia Spry-Leverton

It is almost noon and the sun strikes the tin roofs of Diourbel like a hammer. In the shade under the trees lining the wide main street small groups of men and women loll on concrete benches, a few goats nodding drowsily at their feet. From a low doorway in a wall comes a noise like a hive of bees buzzing, an insistent hum rising and falling with a rhythmic cadence. As one nears, one can distinguish it as the soft tones of human voices in rapid recitation, scarcely pausing for breath between each phrase.

This sound is heard in towns and villages all over Senegal. It is the signature tune of the *daara*, the Koranic system of education in which 80 per cent of Senegal's Muslim children are educated.

Stepping into the glare of the school's whitewashed mud-floored courtyard, one sees 50 children squatting on mats spread in the shade of a thatch shelter, hunched in concentration over the Arabic text they clutch with both hands.

As they recite they sway forward and backward, their lips forming the phrases they are committing to memory. Most are boys, ranging in age from four or five to the late teens, with a few little girls among them. The children are barefoot, their clothes little better than rags.

Through an archway the pupils' sleeping quarters can be glimpsed, wooden pallets without bedclothes, few in number for the press of children around. From hooks in the rafters hang a few begrimed clothes. A clay pot holds drinking water, exposed to the sun, its surface filmed with dust.

Suddenly, the recitation stops. At a sign from the marabout (master), the children assemble by the doorway. Each wears an alert expression and carries a small plastic bucket or tin can. It is time to eat and no food is provided at the *daara*. The students must beg their meals house-to-house.

Begging is implicit in the life of the *daara*. The marabout, Serigne Abdou Aziz, explains how he, during his education, roamed the town's streets for food twice daily. He maintains that the community accepts alms-giving and is able to provide enough sustenance for the children. He is concerned, however, about the increase in students at *daaras* in his charge, attributing it to the deteriorating conditions of rural life.

Ousman Thioye became a *talibé* (student) a year ago, when his parents brought him here from their village 100 miles away because of the excellent reputation of Diourbel's marabouts. Although he complains that he is hungry all the time, Ousman says he is better off here than in his village, where there is no schooling.

In Diourbel, parents are not asked for any contribution for their children's education. Nor are the children in the *daaras* in Diourbel bullied or beaten by the marabouts, nor obliged to beg for money to provide them with an income, as they would be in *daaras* in other areas. Of the many thousands of children in *daaras* throughout Senegal, Ousman and the others in Diourbel are the fortunate few.

### Reforms and dreams

What makes Serigne Abdou Aziz's *daaras* different are the reforms he instituted — based on the provisions of the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

After hearing of the Convention on the radio, he contacted the UNICEF office in Dakar, beginning a dialogue about support for his plan to make radical improvements in *daara* conditions, with Diourbel as a model to be replicated all over the country.

He wants to develop a 12-hectare site outside the town, build workshops and establish a nursery garden and beginning animal husbandry, to give pupils better living standards and a chance to learn practical skills.

Likening the study of the sacred texts to an eye through which a better way of living and of serving others can be seen, Serigne Abdou Aziz wants to adapt Koranic education to help develop Senegal. Graduates from Diourbel who have gone on to success as doctors, economists and businessmen are being asked for contributions to improve Diourbel's conditions today.

### The future is now

Eight miles to the north, on a breezy hilltop near the sea, the model conditions envisaged at Diourbel are already a reality. Six years ago, the *daara* at Malika was built in a grove of eucalyptus trees, an airy complex designed by a Dutch architect. Funding from NGOs and individuals in Europe and support from UNICEF have helped it expand, and now there are two chicken hatcheries and a row of carpentry workshops in addition to the schoolrooms and spacious residential areas. Workshops where electrical engineering and plumbing will be taught are being built. All around are orchards of orange and lemon trees, and a nursery for growing day lilies to sell locally is taking shape.

A girl pupil in Diourbel. The reforms instituted in the town's Koranic schools will give students skills to improve their lives.

The *daara* educates 60 children who learn French and national languages as well as the Koran. Their day begins at 6:30 a.m. with work in the fields or hatcheries for an hour and a half followed by four hours of schooling. In the evening the children again share a rota of outside work.

Support for the enlightened approach and harmonious and supportive atmosphere at the Malika *daara* comes in funds and in kind. The new workshops will soon be dedicated in the name of Madame Mitterand of France in recognition of French assistance. While in the kitchen, a new delivery of olive oil, a gift from Italy, was a recent source of great delight.

*Julia Spry-Leverton is a consultant for UNICEF.*

## *Excerpts from an interview*

***The following are excerpts from an interview with Assane Diop, Senegalese Minister for Public Health and Social Action, by Pape Mor Sylla of* Le Soleil *newspaper in Senegal. The paper carried a four-page supplement in April devoted to the issue of talibés, the students or disciples who live in Koranic schools throughout Senegal, and their unique problems. With UNICEF support, the Government has launched a new project to improve their education and their lives.***

Assane Diop: This project is a direct result of a directive issued by the President of the Republic when he formed the new Government in March 1990. It was confirmed by the Prime Minister, Habib Thiam, after his nomination.

It aims at assisting marabouts (Muslim school masters) in educating *talibés* ... thus ensuring that they will not only receive a proper education in the Koran but also the skills necessary to get a job.

Traditionally, the parents helped by providing marabouts millet or groundnuts, but with the economic slump, parents are no longer able to support marabouts. To feed the children, marabouts often send them to work in the fields in the rural areas and to beg in the towns ... Consequently, most do not have the time to study the Koran properly and their education suffers.

A pilot project for between 5,000 and 10,000 students has begun in the rural areas to provide proper lodging and food, and to teach animal husbandry or agriculture ... A further 5,000 to 10,000 students in urban zones will be taught trades, such as mechanics...

We want to give parents confidence in the *daaras*. We also want communities to become involved so that they support their schools.

# Accentuating the positive in health messages

POSITIVE PSA
Younger boy: Hey Ram! Where are you going with your sister?
Older boy: I'm taking her to the health post for her polio drops.
Younger boy: Why? She doesn't look ill.
Older boy: No, she's not. But after she gets her polio drops she won't get the disease like I did.
Older boy: When I was little, my parents didn't know about polio drops. So I didn't get any and my leg got paralysed.
Older boy: But now I know that to prevent polio, every child between the ages of 1 1/2 months and 12 months must get three doses of polio vaccine, at one-month intervals. That's why I'm taking my sister.
Younger boy: That so? Wait a moment! I'll fetch my sister, too!
Older boy (shouting): Hurry!
Narrator: Like Ram, you too should contact your nearest health centre, hospital or health worker to get your child polio drops.

***The picture is frightening, the message critical: a child with a withered leg sits lonely and despairing, as the announcer warns viewers that a similar fate could befall their children unless they are immunized.***

***Public service advertisements such as this spurred an unprecedented demand for immunizations in India after they appeared on television in 1986. However, at the same time, it became slowly apparent they reinforced negative stereotypes of people with disabilities as helpless and hopeless. RINA GILL, Communication and Information Officer in Kathmandu, Nepal, hoped to find another way to get the message across.***

***Here she describes research showing that positive images of the disabled can motivate people in Nepal better than negative images and that understanding can mobilize just as effectively as fear.***

Based on the belief that fear is the best motivator, a public information campaign was created in India in 1986 that aimed to frighten parents into having their children immunized. The public service advertisements (PSAs) appeared in print, on posters and on television and showed children disabled, ostracized and isolated by polio. The campaign worked so well that in some areas vaccine supplies were exhausted.

The advertisements, however, conveyed another message at the same time: that children with disabilities are useless, hopeless, burdensome and, therefore, undesirable. Quite innocently, and with the most honourable intentions, those of us who had created the campaign had reinforced the existing negative stereotypes about people with disabilities.

### Testing the theory

Could the same success be achieved without using such negative images? Because no data existed to answer this question, UNICEF devised a study on the issue.

Seven PSAs were created for television on the subject of polio prevention. Five of them depicted people with disabilities in a positive way: children and adults with disabilities and parents of disabled children were the main characters. They were shown as friendly, intelligent and socially responsible. Each discussed his or her disability in an open and unselfconscious manner, giving information on how polio could be prevented and where immunization was available.

The remaining two PSAs showed disabled people in a negative way, with others speaking about them and criticizing their parents for not having had them immunized. A total of 224 individual interviews and 14 focus group discussions were conducted to assess the announcements.

### Proof positive

The results indicated that the positive and negative PSAs were equally effective in conveying essential information about how to prevent polio. In terms of motivation, however, the positive PSAs seemed slightly more successful than the negative ones. For example, when asked what they thought they should do after watching the positive PSA, an overwhelming majority of the respondents stated that they should teach others about polio, take children for polio drops and give polio drops on time.

Other interesting findings of the research were that when people who saw the positive PSAs were asked which character they liked best, invariably they selected the person with the disability, saying they liked him because he shared important information and provided advice, was helpful and motivated. Those who saw the negative PSAs chose the non-disabled characters as their favourites. About 80 per cent of viewers selected the positive PSAs when asked which film they liked best.

### Following up

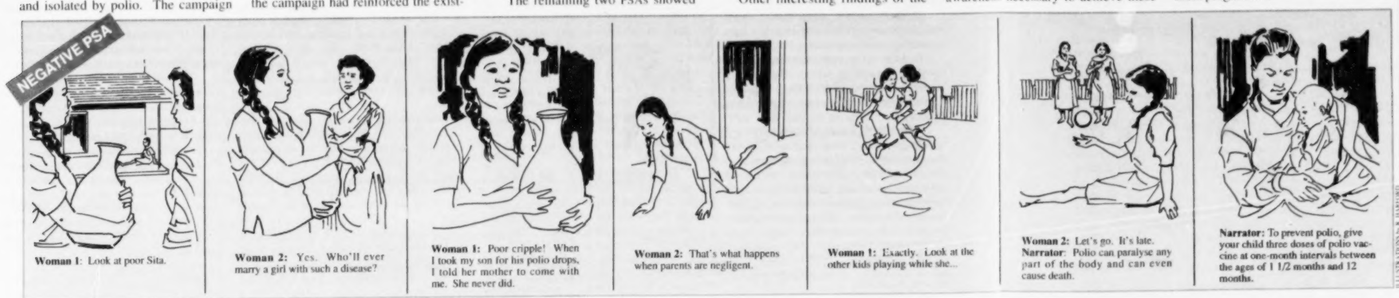
The prevention of disabilities is intrinsic to meeting the goals set at the World Summit for Children for eliminating iodine and vitamin A deficiencies and eradicating polio by the year 2000. Here are some suggestions on how people can create the community awareness necessary to achieve these goals without creating stereotypes:

— If you are involved in producing information material, let people with disabilities speak for themselves. It adds to the credibility and effectiveness of the message.

— If you review films or other materials, be alert for negative words (such as 'handicap' or 'cripple') and negative images, and let producers and writers know how they can improve their work on the disabled. Camera shots, for example, shouldn't zoom in on a person's disability; in articles, writers should first introduce a person and only then his or her disability.

— Integrate people with disabilities and make them more visible in mainstream activities such as primary education.

— Remember to bring the 'disability dimension' to every development programme.


NEGATIVE PSA
Woman 1: Look at poor Sita.
Woman 2: Yes. Who'll ever marry a girl with such a disease?
Woman 1: Poor cripple! When I took my son for his polio drops, I told her mother to come with me. She never did.
Woman 2: That's what happens when parents are negligent.
Woman 1: Exactly. Look at the other kids playing while she...
Woman 2: Let's go. It's late.
Narrator: Polio can paralyse any part of the body and can even cause death.
Narrator: To prevent polio, give your child three doses of polio vaccine at one-month intervals between the ages of 1 1/2 months and 12 months.

# Maghreb vaccination days

By Dr. N. Zerdoumi

Last year, for the third year in a row, the five countries — Algeria, Libya, Mauritania, Morocco and Tunisia — of the Arab Maghreb Union (AMU) called upon their 62 million inhabitants to participate in the Maghreb Vaccination Days. The target was to build upon and sustain children's protection against poliomyelitis, measles, whooping cough, diphtheria, tetanus and tuberculosis.

The Vaccination Days were patterned on earlier campaigns waged successfully in Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia, where, thanks to concerted action, 80 per cent of the children in the Maghreb are vaccinated. The challenge remained to reach those children who were the very hardest to reach, those who lived in the most remote areas or who were from nomadic communities.

### The message was heard

Central to success was an unprecedented consciousness-raising campaign, with the media, the schools and mosques all taking active part. Television played an essential role in urban areas. For instance, during the week preceding vaccination day, television stations in the five countries of the AMU broadcast programmes prepared by their neighbours: spots, sketches, programmes on culture.

Radio helped reach an even broader audience. Thanks to regional stations, dialects no longer posed a problem. Mobilization was also unprecedented in the schools (courses on vaccination) and in the mosques (sermons by the Imams).

Throughout the territory of the Maghreb, an approach adapted to the weather and geographic conditions was implemented. In all, more than 7,600 fixed vaccination centres and 14,800 assembly points were created.

### New targets set

Since the creation of the AMU, other initiatives have also been undertaken to improve the condition of children and in particular of little girls.

A first symposium entitled 'The Girl Child Also', in which 150 experts from the five AMU countries participated, was organized in May 1991 in Morocco. A second symposium, to be held in Mauritania, will soon be considering measures needed to expand educational opportunities for little girls.

On the agenda are such topics as: improving pre-school activities, the protection of children living in difficult circumstances, and AIDS prevention for the entire population.

Finally, last May, the AMU launched a broad consciousness-raising campaign designed to teach mothers how to prevent the diarrhoeal diseases that are the leading cause of infant mortality in the region.

*Dr. N. Zerdoumi is UNICEF Representative in Morocco.*

## Children's health in the Maghreb

Of the 62 million people living in the Arab Maghreb, 11 million are children under the age of two, and 2 million are less than a year old. The rate of infant mortality, although lower now than before, still stands at 67 per thousand.

The major causes of mortality among children are the following infectious and parasitic diseases:

- Neonatal tetanus, which kills children in the first few days following birth. This could easily be eliminated if harmful traditions — such as putting henna, kohl or earth (which actually can transmit the disease) on the newborn child's navel or other techniques — were ended. In addition, all women of child-bearing age need to be vaccinated so that during pregnancy their antibodies to the disease are passed on to their children.
- Measles, which finds fertile ground among children weakened by malnutrition and diarrhoea, sometimes leads to serious pulmonary and neurological complications. Even if the disease isn't fatal, a child may develop sensory and cerebral handicaps as a result of it.
- Whooping cough and diphtheria, which were responsible for the deaths of many children before vaccination, and which have not completely disappeared at this time.
- Poliomyelitis, which is largely responsible for motor handicaps among the people of the Arab Maghreb: 80 per cent of physical disabilities are apparently the result of this disease. The countries of the Maghreb have set 1995 as the deadline for its eradication through universal vaccination.
- Yellow fever, which is common only in Mauritania. It can be eliminated by vaccination and is targeted by the country's vaccination programme.

Other infectious diseases remain, such as cerebrospinal meningitis and cholera. Cholera is much easier to treat than in the past, thanks to antibiotics and oral rehydration techniques. Often only isolated cases of these two diseases occur, but epidemics can still break out.

## *The Arab Maghreb Union puts children first*

The Arab Maghreb Union (AMU) was proclaimed in 1989 by the heads of State of Algeria, Libya, Mauritania, Morocco and Tunisia. Although different in geography and climate, the five countries have similar problems: a high birth rate, a high infant mortality rate, numerous diseases, inadequate basic services, food shortages and illiteracy.

The five Ministers of Health, among the first to put the will to unite and the desire for solidarity of the AMU peoples into concrete form, have made lower infant mortality and improved health care their first objective.

# How Canada keeps volunteer commitment high

***From the early 1950s, when a small group of dedicated women met to organize Halloween collections and greeting card sales for UNICEF in Canada, the general volunteer base of the Canadian UNICEF Committee has grown to nearly 45,000 people. Approximately 8,500 of these are considered core volunteers, active in Committee work on either a year-round or seasonal basis.***

***ANNE TAIT, Director of Volunteer Services, writes on how the Canadian Committee manages to keep volunteer commitment and spirits high.***

The face of volunteerism is changing in Canada and new challenges are emerging. The vastness of the country, the diversity of the population in age and lifestyle, the economic climate and the high number of families where both parents work, all have obvious effects on our recruitment efforts.

UNICEF Canada held National Programme Seminars in Toronto at the beginning of this year and addressed these issues specifically in a seminar entitled "Changing Times and Trends", which stirred even the most passive delegates. What emerged is that a number of new, creative volunteer recruitment and retention strategies have been developed to keep UNICEF Canada strong.

**Widening the circle**

Experience has taught us that the best recruiters we have are busy, satisfied UNICEF volunteers, so our volunteer recruitment campaign uses two approaches to attract volunteers. A country-wide campaign is carried out through the mass media, and at the same time each established volunteer has an opportunity to recruit someone on a one-to-one basis.

Because we also now realize that people will volunteer only if their needs are met, we strive to "create UNICEF jobs for potential volunteers" instead of "finding volunteers for UNICEF jobs." We also struggle to provide flexible working environments, giving people periodic or short-term volunteer opportunities or chances to organize special events: they can hold a pumpkin-carving contest, host a fund-raising dinner or write an article. One person who wanted to volunteer couldn't match his time to our existing projects — but he was able to write the script for one of our recruitment brochures.

We also show how being a volunteer for UNICEF can be a family event. Parents and children can take care of a mall display, prepare and send a mailing from home or get their school or place of worship involved in a project.

**Keeping up the good work**

There is a well-founded belief within UNICEF Canada that keeping the volunteers we already have is perhaps our most important role. It is a responsibility the staff and volunteer chairmen of UNICEF Canada share.

Each of our ten provinces has a volunteer-management programme. Training is a strong focus. Volunteers receive an initial orientation, programme training and periodic opportunities to attend seminars and other UNICEF meetings and ongoing orientation. To complement the training sessions, each province is offered a complete recruitment package, a volunteer guide and an orientation video. Volunteers from across the country are also brought together once a year for an intensive weekend of skills development and networking opportunities.

Another popular retention strategy in UNICEF Canada right now is the regional seminar, which brings together 30 or 40 volunteers from one part of the country for a weekend. Participants take part in general discussions and receive programme information. They also have a chance to hear about UNICEF efforts in developing countries. Many grass-roots-level volunteers who might otherwise have remained isolated from the work in the field are re-energized by this glimpse of the whole picture.

Recognition is another way we retain volunteers. UNICEF Canada has on record over 150 individuals who have served the organization for more than 20 years and each year the number is growing. Such years of service and special achievements are recognized formally through our certificate and pin programme.

Perhaps even more important to the 'new breed' of volunteer is informal recognition, where we arrange for a photo or article on the volunteer in the newspaper, send a letter of thanks to an employer or family, mention the person in our UNICEF newsletter or help the volunteer develop new skills.

A recurring problem is finding volunteers willing to chair committees or assume other leadership responsibilities. Again, we offer training and try to accommodate needs through shared positions, appropriate delegation and succession planning. We also try to make volunteers feel comfortable suggesting change and developing new initiatives within the organizational mandate. One way to encourage leadership, we have found, is to give people the freedom to assume responsibility, and thus leadership, on their own.

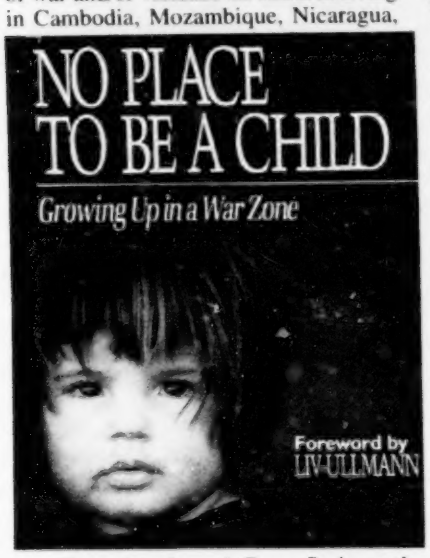
The continued quest for new and suitable volunteers does not come easily. UNICEF Canada is in a constant state of building and rebuilding, particularly when things occasionally fall apart.

The rewards, however, are substantial. In its Volunteer 2000 Study, the American Red Cross credits volunteers with "providing the widest possible diversity of skills, talents, expertise and experience in any organization." It is an assessment with which we fully agree.

# BOOKS

***No Place to be a Child*, by James Garbarino, Kathleen Kostelny and Nancy Dubrow; Lexington Books, D.C. Heath Company, Lexington, Massachusetts, 1991.**

This moving book documents the effects of war and/or violence on children living in Cambodia, Mozambique, Nicaragua,




the West Bank and Gaza Strip and Chicago. Written by three experts in the field of child development who travelled to the areas, it is both authoritative and personal. It offers insights into the meaning and depth of the physical and psychological deprivation endured by children, while at the same time recreating the lives, suffering and great courage of children caught in some of the most destructive conflicts of recent years. The book's foreword is by Liv Ullmann. Jacket copy endorsements are by U.S. Senator Paul Simon; former U.S. Senator George McGovern; and T. Berry Brazelton, M.D., professor emeritus in paediatrics at Children's Hospital in Boston.

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***Social Mobilization and Social Marketing in Developing Communities: Lessons for Communicators*, published in English by Southbound, in Penang, Malaysia, on press in 1992.**

This highly commended book by Neill McKee, Chief of Programme Communication and Information, UNICEF Dhaka, reviews social marketing and social mobilization theory and practice in international development. The book would be of broad interest to various categories of readers: aid agency officials, frontline communication/development planners, field personnel and academics, who may draw applications from the examples and the conclusions to improve their own communication and training programmes. According to James P. Grant, Executive Director of UNICEF, "It is a landmark in development communication thinking." The publisher, Southbound, is offering 30 per cent prepublication discount on the US$22.00 price per copy: i.e. US$15.40 plus surface mail postage of US$3.50 per copy. They are also offering additional discounts for bulk orders: 20 and more copies — 35 per cent; 40 and more — 40 per cent. Requests for brochures and orders for the book can be sent or faxed to Southbound, attention Mr. Chin Saik Yoon, 9 College Square, 10250 Penang, Malaysia, fax numbers: 60 4 379280 or 60 4 281758. Or to Mr. Pierre Mandl, UNICEF New York, 3 United Nations Plaza, H-12F, New York, NY 10017, fax: 212 326-7096.

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***Training Guide in Lactation Management*, by Helen C. Armstrong, an IBFAN Africa/UNICEF publication, New York, to be printed in 1992.**

A comprehensive manual for training health professionals and breastfeeding counsellors, thoroughly and systematically presented and covering a wide variety of relevant topics and issues. Breastfeeding is presented in a national context, with sections covering food and health issues, national policies affecting infant feeding and commercial practices. Eighteen topics relating to lactation management are covered, including breast problems and expression techniques, weaning methods and breastfeeding during a mother's or infant's illness. Another section on counselling includes such topics as listening and learning from mothers and running a mother-support group. The areas of health education and the promotion of breastfeeding through national policies are also presented.

# Philippine baby-friendly hospital bottle free

Internationally known for its successful promotion of breastfeeding and for its rooming-in policy — where infants stay with their mothers and not in a nursery — Jose Fabella Memorial Hospital in Manila is drawing new attention for completely eliminating the use of bottles to feed infants.

To see its innovative policies first-hand, a group of officials from Mexico's Directorate for Maternal and Child Health in the Ministry of Health, senior professionals from several hospitals around the country and UNICEF staff in Mexico visited the Philippines early this year.

According to the baby-friendly regulations at Jose Fabella, as explained to the visitors by the hospital's Director, Dr. Ricardo Gonzalez, no mother is discharged until breastfeeding is well established. Infants born prematurely or with a low birth weight, or who for some other reason cannot remain near their mothers, are nevertheless fed with their mother's milk by tube, dropper or cup.

After their visit to Manila, the Directors of the Gustavo Robirosa Hospital in Villahermosa, south-eastern region of Mexico, and La Perla in Mexico State near the capital decided to eliminate all bottle-feeding from their hospitals.

Other Mexican hospitals participating in the baby-friendly hospital initiative plan to follow suit.

*— Manuel Manrique, Projector Officer, UNICEF Mexico City.*

# LETTERS

Congratulations on your last two issues — a good selection of articles, references to related publications and tidbits of interesting information. Especially refreshing is the underlying focus on country efforts. I hope this continues. In the past too much UNICEF literature gave the impression that governments and others were, if mentioned at all, minor participants in a direct UNICEF-children's relationship, with NGOs assuming the role of UNICEF-helpers.

**Jack Charnow**
**Former Secretary of the UNICEF Executive Board (1947-1981)**
**California**

A friend from the U.S. sent me the January-March copy of ***First Call for Children***. It is important and heart-lifting to know the things being done for children all over the world.

PEACEWAYS organizes conferences, events and workshops for young people to help them find ways to create a peaceful future, and I interact and network with many other youth organizations in our work. The information in ***First Call for Children*** needs to be passed on and the articles in your publication give me material to quote and use in letter writing and phone conversations.

**Ellen Brogren**
**PEACEWAYS**
**Australia**

I'M CLIMBING UP HILLS
AND WALKING DOWN SLOPES
SEARCHING OUT FUEL FOR OUR MEALS
FOR SOMETHING THAT CANT MOVE, TREES ARE TOUGH TO FIND
DOUG BRUNNER

# Papermaking tradition spurs community development in Nepal

***From the bark of a mountain bush that clings to the hills and ridges of mid-western Nepal has come a thriving project, reinvigorating a 900-year-old craft tradition of papermaking and block printing, and financing community development projects benefiting thousands. FRANCESCA TOSO, Information Officer in the Greeting Card Operation, UNICEF, Geneva, describes this unique experience.***

The Nepalese woodcutting and farming communities that have lived for centuries in the remote ridges of the Himalayas have new hope and new opportunities in recent years, thanks to a UNICEF-supported project.

Called the 'Community Development through Production of Paper and Greeting Cards' project, it helps coordinate the harvesting of *lokta*, the bark of a mountain shrub, and its eventual transformation into beautiful, traditionally produced greeting cards.

Forty per cent of the profits that the project generates are invested in development activities in the three hill districts where *lokta* grows and is gathered, and in the town of Bhaktapur where the cards are made, benefiting over 12,000 families.

The reinvestment of profits also means that the development efforts are sustainable. Based on the project's success thus far, the Nepal Government's 1992-1996 Master Plan of Operations hopes to generate about US$500,000 for over 300 community development activities from project profits, reaching 22,000 familes by the end of 1996.

**Rural/urban cooperation**

The project, introduced by UNICEF and the Agricultural Development Bank under an existing 'Small Farmers Development Programme', trains *lokta* cutters to gather the bark in environmentally sound ways to allow regeneration of the bushes. This protects the fragile ecosystem in which the plant grows.

The bark is then carried to villages at a few days' walking distance down the mountains. There, farmers purchase the *lokta* bark from the upland collectors for cash, thanks to a short-term loan scheme provided by the project. The farmers' families are trained to produce the paper, which they do during winter months, when field work is lighter. As a result of the project, more than 5,000 rural families of *lokta* gatherers and papermakers have earned additional income.

The paper is then sold to the Bhaktapur Craft Printers (BCP), an organization of Nepali craft workers sponsored by UNICEF. At BCP's main plant in Bhaktapur, on the outskirts of Kathmandu, more than 160 artisans transform the rough paper into cards, stationery and other gift items.

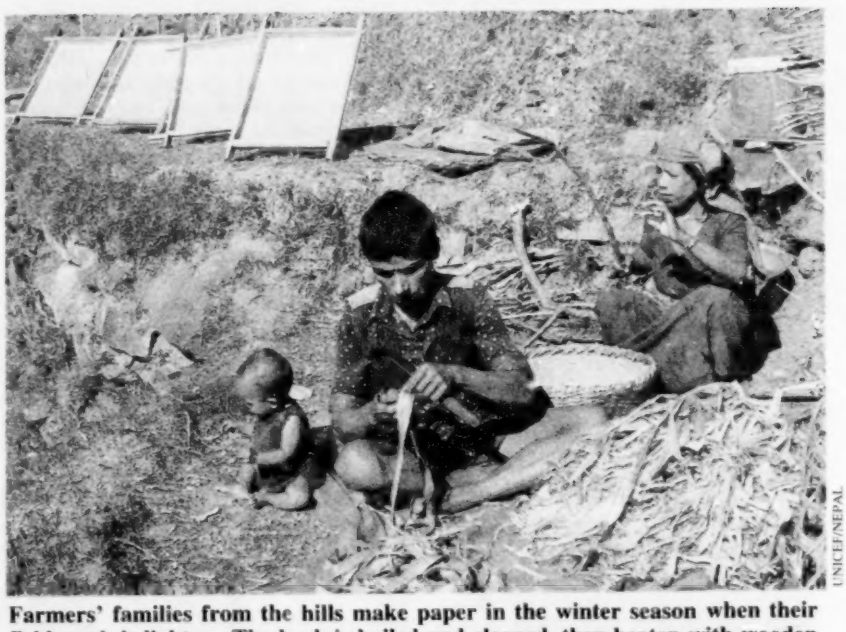
**Rising demand and supply**

The three hill districts where *lokta* is gathered cannot satisfy the rising demand for *lokta* paper, so other districts in Nepal are being explored for further supplies. The project also intends to diversify its raw material base under the new 1992-1996 plan, to make use of banana leaves, rice and millet straw, and wild grasses from the lowlands.

Another type of demand — for community and development services — is being created as well. The new child-care centres, safe water and sanitation facilities, education and training opportunities for girls and women, and immunization and other primary health care services that have already been created are sparking demand for similar services in other communities.

The project also has successfully brought together various areas of UNICEF work, linking essential programme interventions to the marketing of a locally produced UNICEF product and at the same time answering many different community needs.

The beautiful handmade cards from Bhaktapur enrich the collection of UNICEF cards and gifts and the lives of thousands of children.



UNICEF/NEPAL

**Farmers' families from the hills make paper in the winter season when their field work is lighter. The bark is boiled and cleaned, then beaten with wooden mallets to produce the fibre pulp. The pulp is mixed with water and poured into a floating frame. The skilled papermakers produce even sheets of crisp long-fibre paper, sun-dried on the fallow terraces.**

UNICEF/NEPAL

**At the Bhaktapur Craft Printers, a UNICEF-sponsored organization of Nepali craft workers and farmers, craftspeople transform the raw sheets into all forms of paper products, stationery and gift items. Hand-dyeing, relief-block printing and skilled hand-working produce unique objects.**

# RESEARCH DIGEST

## Stabilization and structural adjustment under scrutiny

(A summary of "IS ADJUSTMENT CONDUCIVE TO LONG-TERM DEVELOPMENT? THE CASE OF AFRICA IN THE 1980s", Innocenti Occasional Papers, Economic Policy Series, Number 21, by Giovanni Andrea Cornia)

This clear and concise guide to the economic crisis in Africa traces the development approaches and policy failures that led to Africa's vulnerability 20 years after most countries had gained independence. It then examines the degree to which stabilization and structural adjustment programmes have been able to restore non-crisis conditions, in terms of balance of payments, budget deficits and inflation, and appraises the programmes' success in removing the deep-seated distortions of the African economies. It finds that, despite countries' substantial and painful efforts to implement stabilization and structural programmes, for the most part only modest results were achieved.

**The roots of the problems**

The paper clearly describes the disadvantaged base from which Africa started, as well as its policy failures. For instance, problems in the agricultural sector became apparent in the 1960s, when production was first observed to be growing more slowly than population. One of the reasons for this was the increasing differentiation of agriculture. The new social strata of landless or small-holding rural poor thus created were neither able to invest in agricultural technology nor modernize farming practices because of insufficient control over inputs and land.

Irrigation and fertilizers were used in land-poor African countries, for instance, much less frequently than in Asian countries with similar land scarcity and GDP per capita, and production continued to drop. Also, government policies built transport infrastructures and created subsidies that favoured large-scale farmers at the expense of small: in 1976, for instance, US$39 million was spent on research for coffee, while no significant research was done on staples such as sorghum, millet and tubers.

Similar problems were encountered in international trade. African countries reached independence with a very limited industrial base: in 1965, manufacturing accounted for only 9 per cent of GDP compared with 14 per cent in South Asia, 23 per cent in Latin America and 27 per cent in East Asia. Although manufacturing production rose over the years, it was in sectors directed to domestic consumption and with relatively simple technologies, such as processed food and other basic consumer goods. Export dependence on traditional primary commodities and markets, therefore, was not eased.

Other problems included a lax fiscal policy and growing indebtedness in sub-Saharan Africa which substantially worsened the budget deficit and, indirectly, the balance of payments position.

The extremely low level of development of human resources in most countries at independence was another formidable obstacle. In 1960, all of sub-Saharan Africa had only 1,200 indigenous graduates.

**What stabilization and structural adjustment achieved**

It is argued that in spite of the large number of IMF- and World Bank-supported programmes — 241 were initiated between 1980 and 1989 — stabilization has had only limited success in reducing deficits and inflation. In fact, with few exceptions, stabilization has entailed severe losses in growth, investment and human welfare. The paper shows that adverse changes in international terms of trade, interest rates and access to finance made it more difficult for the programmes to succeed. However, the limitations of the orthodox approach to stabilization — which calls for devaluation, austerity and liberalization — in economies like those of most African countries are also responsible for the relatively modest results most often achieved.

The limitations of the orthodox approach to structural adjustment are even more evident. Indeed, while some of the orthodox policies may have had a positive effect on micro-economic efficiency, by the late 1980s the drastic cuts in expenditures on health, education and rural infrastructure, the continued emphasis on traditional exports, and the import liberalization were pushing African economies away from a development path that is desirable and necessary from a long-term perspective.

As a result, after almost a decade of adjustment efforts, sub-Saharan Africa finds itself facing the usual problems of overdependence on primary commodities, a stagnant or shrinking industrial base, and sluggish and highly unstable growth in the food crop sector. In addition, in 75 per cent of the countries undertaking adjustment programmes, capital accumulation and primary enrolment rates were lower than in the early 1980s.

The paper concludes: "While the shortcomings of African stabilization and structural adjustment are obviously controversial, it appears that the adjustment policies applied on a massive scale in the 1980s have not been able to provide a solution to Africa's old and new problems."

# NEWS BRIEFS

**DROUGHT IMPERILS MILLIONS IN SOUTHERN AFRICA:** Some 18 million people, 14 million of them women and children, face starvation and disease as the worst drought of the century withers crops and decimates livestock across southern Africa. In the 10 countries particularly affected — Angola, Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, Swaziland, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe — the drought has plunged grain production to one half the levels of the previous year. The World Food Programme estimates that over 4 million metric tonnes of food aid will be needed to meet emergency needs and ensure food availability to avert starvation. UNICEF has appealed for US$53 million to meet critical non-food needs (such as vaccines and agricultural tools and seeds), as part of a total UN appeal for US$854 million for the region.

**MALARIA CONFERENCE NEARS:** On 26-27 October, a ministerial-level conference will be held in Amsterdam to discuss ways to control malaria and reduce its social and human costs. More than 2,200 million of the world's people live in malarial areas and about 280 million are infected by the parasite, according to the World Health Organization. It estimates that over 1 million lives are lost to the disease every year. Artemether, an oil-soluble, plant-derived drug long used in China to treat malaria, has been credited in recent research as a well-tolerated and rapidly effective treatment for both adults and children. It is effective against chloroquinine-resistant strains of *P. falciparum* malaria. As a preventive strategy, insecticide-treated bed nets are proving effective.

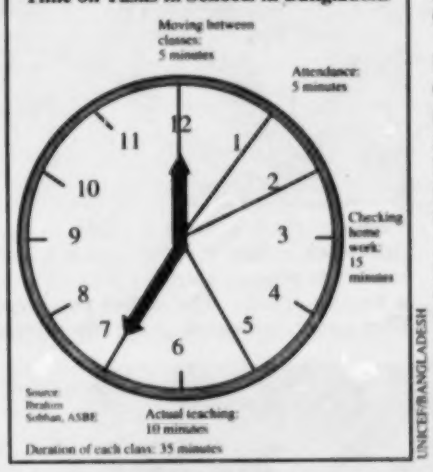
**SEASONED WITH VITAMIN A:** A study conducted in the Philippines found that fortifying monosodium glutamate (MSG), a commonly used food seasoning, with vitamin A was the cheapest and most efficient way of reaching people with the crucial micronutrient. In the study, fortification was found superior to the two other interventions known to prevent deficiency: medicinal supplements and combined horticultural, nutritional, educational and health actions. MSG fortification has also been tested in Indonesia, where it was found to be related to better vitamin A status, improved child growth and lower child mortality. (From a report in the *Xerophthalmia Club Bulletin* 49)

**IN OTHER WORDS:** The Arab Institute for the Rights of Man in Tunisia has formed a commission of jurists, linguists, sociologists and teachers to rephrase two important human rights instruments — the Universal Declaration on Human Rights and the Convention on the Rights of the Child — to put them into language more easily read and understood by children. Once rephrased, the two texts will be submitted to children and teachers for their reactions before they are finalized. The commission plans to illustrate the final versions with drawings submitted by children. (From an IPS report)

**CAMPAIGNING FOR SUMMIT PROMISES:** Letting people know about the World Summit for Children and what they can do to ensure that Summit promises are kept is the goal of the World Summit for Children Keeping the Promise Campaign. To this end, the global Campaign prepares and distributes sermon ideas, relevant to religious calendars, about the Summit for use in places of worship (for Christians, Jews and Muslims); for schools, lesson plans on the Summit are available for grades 4 through 8. For more information or to order materials, in particular those prepared for activities in schools from 12-16 October and in places of worship on the weekend of 16-18 October, contact the Keeping the Promise Office at 236 Massachusetts Avenue, N.E., Suite 300, Washington, D.C. 20002, USA. Tel.: 202-546-1900 or fax 202-546-3228.

**TIMING IS OF THE ESSENCE:** In Bangladesh, fewer hours are spent on classroom instruction than in other countries in the region, a weakness that an NGO pilot project, receiving UNICEF support, aims to address. Called school-based education, it makes the classroom the focus of all teaching and learning and stresses group work and peer learning. It will increase the time children actually spend on schoolwork by extending classes to 60 minutes from the current 35, much of which is actually spent on non-teaching matters. In school-based education, children will be given no homework, because parents, many of whom are illiterate, can give them little help at home.

**Time on Tasks in Schools in Bangladesh**




Source: Ibrahim Sobhan, ASBE

Duration of each class: 35 minutes

UNICEF/BANGLADESH

**UNICEF CARD REPORT:** The fiscal report card for UNICEF's Greeting Card Operation for the 1990 season was estimable: gross proceeds from the sale of greeting cards and related products were up by 25.5 per cent, resulting in a net operating profit of $62.8 million. After exchange rate losses and other factors were accounted for, GCO's profit was over $76 million, up by more than 24 per cent over 1989 figures.

**NIGERIA'S CHILDREN BENEFIT FROM EPI:** Energetic NGO support, better default tracing and strategies such as house-to-house and night-time immunizations made Nigeria's expanded programme of immunization (EPI) successful — with more than 80 per cent of children under one vaccinated and the infant mortality rate down. An estimated 150,000 deaths from vaccine-preventable diseases were averted in 1990. (From an IPS report)

**EDUCATION FOR PEACE:** Italian, Slovenian and Croatian teachers met recently in north-eastern Italy to discuss their role in building peace in the troubled region. In a final statement, participants committed themselves to an active defence of children regardless of political differences and divisions. The meeting was organized by the Italian Committee for UNICEF and sponsored by local authorities.

**IT'S A FACT:** About 4 million copies of *Facts for Life* are now in circulation in 138 languages. The booklet, published by UNICEF, WHO, UNESCO and over 140 other voluntary organizations, presents practical, low-cost suggestions in plain language to help protect children worldwide. Some of the communication spin-offs include calendars based on *Facts for Life* in countries such as Iran, Mozambique and Swaziland; in Kenya, 10 million matchboxes carry its messages; and in numerous countries, television and radio programmes are based on the booklet.

**DEVELOPMENT ON THE READING LIST:** Secondary school students in Australia are being introduced to development concerns through a three-book series based on *The State of the World's Children* report. Andrea McGinlay, Education Officer at the UNICEF Committee of Australia, conceived the series as part of an Education for Development project. The first book on health will give 9th and 10th graders in Australia perspectives on such issues as primary health care, vitamin A deficiency and growth charts. The two other books will be on water and food.

**NEW ZEALAND HEARING FOR UNCED:** A Children's Hearing on environment and development was held in the city of Wanganui on the North Island of New Zealand in April as part of preparations for June's United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) in Rio. Among the participating students was Rema Erueti, the 14-year-old Maori girl selected to represent New Zealand at the Global Children's Hearing in Brazil.

**FIRST KOREAN CONFERENCE ON CHILDREN:** More than 300 people from government agencies and NGOs in South Korea met at the beginning of May in Seoul at the country's first national conference on the survival, protection and development of children and youth. South Korea's national programme of action for children was discussed and a National Council for Children and Youth was created to help implement and monitor the programme. The conference also sent a message to the Rio Earth Summit, urging world leaders to keep the promises made during the World Summit for Children.

**QUOTABLES:** "Would the world countenance sophisticated ad campaigns promoting the sniffing of glue, the fatal combination of drinking and driving, or the use of drugs that poison rather than relieve illness? Is tobacco promotion any less abhorrent? ... I would propose we seek an end to all tobacco advertising and promotion by the year 2000, or even earlier, if possible ... This would be particularly helpful in the developing countries, which have been targeted for saturation ad campaigns by the tobacco industry."

— UNICEF Executive Director James P. Grant, in an address to the Eighth World Conference on Tobacco or Health, in Buenos Aires at the end of March.

"...It is virtually impossible to overstate the significance of children's political powerlessness — the lack of a vote exacerbated by the lack of a voice and the lack of money.

"It is because of that powerlessness that we have national health insurance for one of our dependent populations (the elderly) but not the other (children). It is because of that powerlessness that the budget cuts of the 1980s focused on children's programmes; that we regulate not just nursing homes and factories (as bad as they are) but animal shelters more than we regulate child care; that we have ... welfare for the aged and disabled but not for children."

— James D. Weill, General Counsel of the Children's Defense Fund, speaking to journalists at a conference organized by the Columbia School of Journalism earlier this year on coverage of children's issues by the press in America.

# EVENTS AND MEETINGS

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **July** | | |
| 18-22 | Washington, D.C. | World Assembly 92: 'Improving the Human Condition' (International Federation of Social Workers and the National Association of Social Workers) |
| 11 | Seville | EXPO — UNICEF Day |
| 19-24 | Amsterdam | 8th International Conference on AIDS (WHO) |
| 21-31 | London | Conference: 'Families at Risk' (Institute of Family Therapy) |
| **August** | | |
| 1-7 | global | World Breastfeeding Week |
| 2-7 | Mesa-Flagstaff, Arizona | 20th World Conference of World Organization for Early Childhood Education (OMEP) |
| 9 | Barcelona | Olympics Concert (Summit Declaration) (UNICEF) |
| 14 | The Hague | Danny Kaye International Children's Awards |
| 23-28 | Mmabatho, South Africa | 3rd Congress on Human Rights, Medicine and Law |
| 24-28 | Geneva | Women's World Congress in support of Children's Summit Goals |
| 30 Aug - 2 Sept. | Chicago | 9th International Congress on Child Abuse and Neglect (ISPCAN) |
| **September** | | |
| — | Vienna | General Informal Meeting of International Youth NGOs |
| 4-5 | Rio de Janeiro | 2nd International Conference on AIDS and Street Youth |
| 6-10 | Rio de Janeiro | International Paediatric Association 20th Congress |
| 7-11 | Nairobi | Rehabilitation International 17th World Congress |
| 9-11 (tentative) | Oxford, U.K. | Conference on Population and Environment (International Union for the Scientific Study of Population) |
| 16-18 | Colombo | 2nd SAARC Conference on South Asian Children |
| 21-24 | Glasgow | Justice for Children International Conference (Univ. of Glasgow/UK Committee for UNICEF/Save the Children) |
| **October** | | |
| 7-9 | Montreal | Conference: 'Infant and Child Mortality in the Past' (IUSSP) |
| 16 | global | World Food Day 'Trees for Life' |
| 26-27 | Amsterdam | Ministerial Conference on Malaria |

— (Date unavailable)

Please let ***First Call for Children*** know about your events and meetings by sending notices four months prior to the event to Yvonne Lester, *First Call for Children*, 3 UN Plaza, New York, NY 10017 or fax: (212) 326-7768.

# Girl's education: From childhood to womanhood

By Sara Ann Friedman

"When a boy is born in my country, there is joy. When a girl is born, there is silence." This comment was made by a school principal from Beirut as she opened her presentation at a recent conference entitled, 'Education of the Girl Child: A Human Right, A Social Gain', a follow-up to the November 1991 meeting sponsored by the Education Working Group of the NGO Committee on UNICEF. *(See **First Call for Children,** January-March 1992, page 14.)* Reflecting a pervasive attitude in many countries, her comment also mirrored a firm belief held by most of the 275 participants that a girl's education is not only a matter of school attendance but social acceptance, that it begins not in the classroom but in the family, and not when a girl is five or six but from the moment of her birth.

Representatives from NGOs, governments, donor agencies and educational institutions attended the two-day conference at UNICEF House in New York held on 21 and 22 April, where they heard major speeches from leading women educators and advocates: Zimbabwe's Minister of Education and Culture, Fay Chung, and Princess Sarvath El Hassan of Jordan. During smaller regional working groups throughout the meeting, participants also heard and discussed reports from more than a dozen countries on their programmes aimed at increasing girls' access to education. The conference proposed recommendations for submission to the UNICEF Executive Board session in June and a *Call to Action* for all NGOs on the subject of the education of the girl child. (*See box below.*)

The statistics are well known but consistently staggering: two thirds of the one billion illiterate adults are women (the vast majority of whom live in South Asia, sub-Saharan Africa and the Middle East) and that two thirds of the 130 million children who have no access to primary schools are girls. It is also believed that more than 1 million girl babies died from starvation, neglect or abuse just because they were born girls.

Also well known are the tangible links between female education and economic and social benefit to a nation — lower birth rates, lower infant mortality rates, higher family incomes, greater social mobility and more sustained socio-economic improvements. "Women constitute half the population," said Fay Chung, Zimbabwe's Education and Culture Minister. "When a nation's women are neglected and underdeveloped, that nation will be constantly pulled backwards." The state of economic underdevelopment of many third world countries, she adds, is closely correlated to the state of education and skills deprivation. "An illiterate, poorly educated nation whose human resources are underdeveloped will remain underdeveloped and will find it impossible to negotiate on an equal basis with better endowed, more developed nations."

In Jordan, Princess El Hassan directly connects the rapid decline in infant and child mortality and the achievement of universal immunization almost three years ahead of the 1990 goal with a "silent (and dramatic) revolution" in girls' education. Compulsory and free, primary school enrolment for girls in Jordan is 99 per cent (compared to 95 per cent for boys); in one generation secondary school enrolment has risen from 8 per cent to 64 per cent (with girls slightly ahead of boys); at the community college level, young women make up two thirds of the students, and university enrolment is almost equally divided between men and women. Beyond the classroom, women are found working in every sphere of life; they are teachers and doctors, architects, engineers, lawyers and pilots.

Country reports revealed dramatic disparities and varying degrees of success in equal access to education and opportunity for girls and women. Some countries may achieve high enrolment for girls but make slow progress in the broader participation of women. Others struggle to keep girls in school past the age of 11.

In Nigeria, where free and compulsory education was introduced in 1955, many women are entering the professions, and the executive council of every state is required to include women. In Mali, after 30 years of independence, 84 per cent of girls have never attended school and 60 per cent have dropped out during primary school. In Jordan women fly planes; in Saudi Arabia they are not allowed to drive.

While some differences could be accounted for by economic constraints, by far the larger issue, it was agreed, was the

**continued on page 15**

UNICEF/3951/89/SPRAGUE

**Gender equality begins in the family.**

## A human right, a social gain NGO call to action

*"Universal access to primary education with special emphasis for girls"* was established as a goal for children and their development in the 1990s by the Plan of Action of the World Summit for Children, which also asserted that "*efforts for the enhancement of women's status and their role in development must begin with the girl child.*"

"*All gender stereotyping in education should be eliminated,*" urged the World Declaration on Education for All in Jomtien, March 1990.

Acknowledging the large and centuries-old gender disparities, these international documents affirm the importance of a girl's education as a human right and an essential factor in the economic and social development of her community and her nation.

Yet little progress is being made. Today, the gender gap remains large and persistent, even widening in some countries. Currently the literacy rate of women in the developing world is two thirds that of men. Sixty per cent of those children who have no access to primary education are girls.

For two days, NGOs, joining with representatives from more than a dozen countries in five continents, multilateral and bilateral agencies, explored ways to confront these problems and to make education for girls truly a human right and a social gain.

The 275 participants of the conference called on non-governmental organizations everywhere to enlist their membership in the following steps:

— Urge governments to implement the World Summit Plan of Action and make education for girls a national priority.

— Serve as advocates on behalf of girls' education, striving to give girls equal access to preschool and primary education, both formal and informal, and to assure them continuing quality education.

— Form coalitions with other NGOs, groups working for the advancement of women, professional organizations, religious bodies, governments and UN agencies to improve access to education for girls.

— Monitor programmes at community and country levels to assure they are effective in equalizing girls' access to quality education.

— Develop programmes of early intervention to improve girls' health and readiness to learn.

**continued on page 14**

## *Standing up for children at conferences*

Getting the concerns of NGOs and children onto the agendas of international UN conferences has been a persistent goal of UNICEF and members of the NGO Committee on UNICEF. The following stories tell of their hard-fought efforts.

**UNCED: Children Win a Place on Agenda 21**

Since the third UNCED (United Nations Conference on Environment and Development) Prepcom in Geneva in September 1991, UNICEF and the NGO Committee on UNICEF have worked long and hard to place women's and children's interests at the forefront of UNCED. Amid the frenzied rush of UNCED's Fourth Prepcom in New York on 2 March to 3 April 1992, the concerns of children won specific recognition in the draft text of Agenda 21, the action plan of the Brazil conference which covers a wide range of concerns from biodiversity and climate to the major groups in society. They now share equal billing with youth in a chapter entitled "Youth and Children". Given the multitude of competing interests in the 800 pages of draft text, the inclusion was a major victory, according to Cyril Ritchie, Chair of the Working Group on Strategies for Children in Geneva and representative of the NGO Committee on UNICEF at Prepcom IV.

The initial draft of Agenda 21 listed the major groups as women, youth, farmers, business, indigenous communities, NGOs, local authorities — but *not* children. This was unacceptable to UNICEF and most NGOs who believe that "not only are children *a* major group, but *the* major group," according to Ritchie. "They are both the most vulnerable and the ones who are going to be responsible for the future world."

A plenary resolution on *Environment and Development: First Call for Children,* signed by over 100 organizations and adopted at the Global NGO Forum for UNCED held in Paris in December 1991, was their first tangible victory. This resolution was later used at Prepcom IV as a basis for the draft text of a separate chapter for children in Agenda 21.

Winning initial support for a chapter on children from a wide range of NGOs and several governments, the draft text was eventually incorporated into the expanded chapter. "It was made very plain to us," says Ritchie, "that if we insisted on a separate chapter, we would be opening the door to a flood of new chapters." That was not consistent with the mood of the govern-

**continued on page 15**

# Two regional consultations

**By Daniel Wegener**

Two years after the World Conference on Education for All, held in March 1990 in Jomtien, Thailand, two newly formed EFA Networks (*see AFC, Vol. VI, No. 1*) convened regional conferences.

SOUTH ASIA

From 24 to 26 February 1992, over 60 people (including representatives from UN and multilateral agencies, national and international NGOs, and the Governments of Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Maldives and Nepal), attended the first EFA regional consultation in Dhaka, Bangladesh. Organized by the EFA Network Bangladesh and the Campaign for Popular Education with significant support from UNICEF, the conference revealed how NGOs, governments and agencies can work cooperatively and systematically over issues of funding, programming, supervision and evaluation.

A theme repeatedly touched on in the country reports and discussion was the vast number of people in the region who lack access to basic education. Participants also expressed concern for the great disparity between educational opportunities for women and girls and those for men and boys. They also noted the influence of religious and cultural traditions as well as positive strategies for promoting equal partnership between women and men in achieving education for all.

A Regional EFA Network Action Plan was adopted at the consultation and offered to other regions as a model for follow-up. The plan proposes a Phase II Task Force, composed of two representatives — one man and one woman — from each of the eight South Asian countries to develop a draft constitution and permanent secretariat and plan a second regional conference to be held in Kathmandu, Nepal in late October.

LATIN AMERICA

From 23 to 25 April 1992, 35 participants from NGOs and NGO networks, representatives from UNESCO, UNICEF, UNDP and the Government of Chile attended the second regional EFA consultation at Punta de Tralca, Chile.

Juan Carlos Tedesco, Director of the Regional Office for UNESCO, challenged NGOs to contribute to the three main fields of action in Latin America: building national consensus and new alliances to achieve education for all; institutional transformation in response to rapid change; and new definitions of curriculum and teaching methods designed to meet basic learning needs.

NGO participants were not aware of the Jomtien process because there has been relatively little discussion in Latin America on the Jomtien documents. The meeting aroused their interest and commitment to promote similar events at the national level that would sustain the debate on EFA and meet basic learning needs responding to the widely varied countries within the region.

A background paper was developed and circulated prior to the meeting to stimulate discussion. And participants worked together to develop a statement entitled "Framework of Action for Latin American NGO Contributions to Meeting Basic Learning Needs". Both documents will be published and circulated throughout the region to guide national consultations.

An informal regional network headquartered in Santiago will monitor developments at the national level and collect reactions and recommendations for concrete action during the next 18 months. Research will be promoted on three main priority interests: the role and educational needs of women; new alliances; and new funding modalities.

Participants called for a second regional meeting during 1993 to analyse the outcome of the national consultation process and to develop concrete plans for greater regional cooperation on programmes designed to promote innovative action in meeting basic learning needs in Latin American.

For a copy of the full reports contact: EFA Network, 2 UN Plaza, #1124, New York, NY 10017. Tel: (212) 953-3115.

*Daniel Wegener is co-convener of International Coordination Committee of the EFA Network.*

## A human right, a social gain

**continued from page 13**

— Help families and communities to be sensitive to the discrimination and disadvantages the girl child endures.
— Create programmes that facilitate girls' attendance at school by addressing such problems as excessive household burdens, absence of female teachers, long distances to school, and other obstacles.
— Mobilize communities to help families overcome barriers to girls' education.
— Develop educational programmes and well-formulated curricula, including indigenous literature, that will make education relevant to the changing roles of women and men in society.
— Establish and expand local and national databases on girls' access to and participation in education.
— Inform the media of inequities in girls' education and the need to overcome them; identify and cultivate members of the media who will report on them.
— Sensitize men and the community to the importance of education and equal treatment of girls.
— Improve the status of the girl child by creating awareness of the crucial contribution of women to the total well-being of society.
— Eliminate all gender-based attitudes and practices within your own organization.
— Initiate programmes for girls in especially difficult circumstances such as girls who are disabled, abused, school drop-outs, refugees, migrants, homeless or who live in rural or remote areas, and those who live in extreme poverty.

The problems of gender disparity in girls' education are not only a question of available resources but also of attitudes and traditional patterns. As grass-roots organizations, NGOs are well placed not only to mobilize local communities to make the best use of their resources, but also to help bring about the attitude changes required for a permanent solution.

UNICEF/ZIMBABWE/SOLOMON

**This day-care centre in Zimbabwe relieves older sisters of child-care burdens so they can attend school.**

## Upcoming conferences and events

— The 9th Quinquennial Conference of the International Council for Education of the Visually Handicapped (ICEVH), *Working Together in the Decade of the '90s: Strategies to Advance Equal Opportunities for Children and Youth with Visual Handicaps*, 26-31 July 1992. Immediately following is the ICEVH Early Intervention Conference on 2-5 August 1992. Both events will take place at the Sukothai Thammathirat Open University, Bangkok, Thailand. For registration and information contact: Mr. Pecharat Techavachara, Foundation for the Blind in Thailand, 420 Rajavithi Road, Phyathai, Bangkok, Thailand 10400.

— World Breastfeeding Week, 1-7 August 1992. Organized by the World Alliance for Breastfeeding Action (WABA), the week-long event is part of a long-term strategy to re-establish and maintain a global breastfeeding culture, to increase public awareness and involvement in the protection, support and promotion of breastfeeding. Promoting the 1992 theme, "The WHO/UNICEF Baby-Friendly Hospital Initiative" (BFHI), are numerous activities including discussions, exhibits, fairs, competitions and displays with participation by hospitals, clinics and community organizations. For more information contact: Laura J. Best, International Coordinator, WBW, 34-11 146th Street, Flushing, New York, NY 11354, USA. Tel/fax: (718) 886-4423.

— The Ninth International Congress on Child Abuse and Neglect, 30 August to 2 September 1992, Chicago, Illinois, USA. Hosted by the National Committee for Prevention of Child Abuse, and entitled, *An International Commitment to Prevent Child Abuse*, the Congress will draw over 2,000 professionals from more than 80 countries. Contact: 9th ISPCAN Congress, 676 N. St. Clair Street, Suite 1765, Chicago, Illinois 60611, USA. Tel: (312) 951-9600; fax: (312) 951-9854.

— Second International Homebirth Conference, 4-7 October 1992, Sydney, Australia. Contact: Conference Secretariat (SIHC), GPO Box 2609, Sydney NSW 2001, Australia. Tel: (612) 241-1478; fax: (612) 251-3552.

— World AIDS Day, Tuesday, 1 December 1992. The theme this year is *AIDS: A Community Commitment*. To receive regular copies of the newsletter, *World AIDS Day Features*, Contact: Mrs. Catherine Dasen, World AIDS Day, Global Programme on AIDS, WHO, 1211 Geneva 27, Switzerland.

— First Rainbow Week for Amerindian and American Children, 28 December - 4 January 1993, in Santiago, Chile. Commemorating the 500th anniversary of the landing of Christopher Columbus in America, the week will feature sporting events, cultural activities, symposia and round-table discussions honouring children in pre-Columbian America. Contact: Asociación Chilena de los igos de Las Jornadas, Arco Iris, Antonio Vafas 806-Providencia, Santiago, Chile. Fax: (56) 2-235-12-73.

— International Conference on Nutrition, December 1992. *(See page15.)*

*Attention NGOs: If you want us to list your event or conference in sufficient time, please send your information 6-12 months before the event. You can fax it to: Editor,* ***Action for Children,*** *(212) 326-7260.*

## *New low cost aids for parents and birth workers*

Two new developments are available from TALC (teaching aids at low cost), appropriate for use at the village and community level.

A home-made model that can play an important part in helping TBAs (traditional birth attendants), midwives and mothers understand and explain the birth process, TALC BABY is the drawing of a mother's pelvis and a baby on a large sheet of paper.

Glued to a cardboard sheet, the drawing (which should be photocopied and used again) can be cut out, the head of the baby connected to its body with a paper-clip or tack so it will rotate easily. TBAs, midwives and mothers can then see how the flexibility of a baby's head enables it to pass easily through the pelvis and birth canal.

A new kind of weighing scale, TALC DIRECT RECORDING SCALE, has a place for the growth chart to be inserted so that the mother herself can put the next dot on the growth curve. In this way, family members can understand the meaning of a growth curve within three months of plotting their child's weight. It also encourages families to discuss and work together on improving their child's nutrition.

Charts, which show the kilogram lines appropriate distances apart, are included with the scale kit. For more information, contact: TALC, P.O. Box 49, St. Alban's Ali 4AX, UK. Tel: (727) 53869; fax: (727) 46852.

**NGO Action for Children**

Editor: Sara Ann Friedman
Geneva correspondent: Joanna Koch
Working Group: Gordon Klopf (OMEP), chair; Yvonne Asamoah (IASSW); Charlotte Brody (ACEI); Rita Cooper (OMEP); Amelia Dozzi (SO); Nancy Dubrow (WFMH); Rosalind Harris (ISS); Kate Katzki (ICSW); Joanna Koch (LLLI); Paul McCleary (CCF); Roberta Ross (ICJW); Bruce Yeager (PLAN).
**NGO Action for Children** is produced by the NGO Committee on UNICEF. The opinions expressed in the articles do not necessarily reflect those of UNICEF.

# From childhood to womanhood

**continued from page 13**

tenacious persistence of centuries-old religious and cultural attitudes that relegate women to acceptable roles, such as motherhood and housekeeping, and determine that girls' education is therefore not important. The greatest success, it was pointed out, takes place in those countries where a political will for change at the very top levels of government is matched by a demand from parents and communities.

"There is nothing in Islamic law that contradicts equality for girls," said Princess El Hassan. "The differences are imposed by religious leaders or governments." For example, the Koranic-recommended mode of conduct to be "modestly clad," she pointed out, applies equally to both sexes. "But as we know," she adds, "that is something which men conveniently forget."

How and where to let go of certain cultural traditions, while preserving others, was a major focus of discussion. "Change is threatening, but sometimes very necessary," said a spokesperson from Guatemala — where the ratio is one girl to seven boys graduating from primary school.

While calling for "positive discrimination" in the connected spheres of girls' education and the rights of women, Zimbabwe's Minister Fay Chung warns that education is never culturally neutral. Imposing an "alien system of education on an African or Asian country can lead to demoralization, disorientation and an inability to develop the country itself," she said. There is a need for education "specifically related to the socio-economic and cultural, local and national realities, while at the same time reflecting universal mores and knowledge." For example, she supports a system that increases the number of women teachers, even in single-sex schools, because they are more likely to be trusted by many third world societies with their daughters. "During the liberation war in Zimbabwe," she recalls, "it was the entry of women guerrillas that convinced the conservative peasantry to join the struggle." In a similar way, today's women teachers can become the catalyst for creating more positive attitudes towards the education of girls." A Nigerian spokesperson said that in her country, where much has been done to raise the status of women, "though their heads were covered, (women's) self-esteem was raised."

While citing the "overwhelming moral imperative" to end the pervasive problem of "gender apartheid" and equalize educational opportunities between boys and girls, James P. Grant, Executive Director of UNICEF, reminded participants that 75 per cent of the countries in the world have some compulsory education policy, that the Convention on the Rights of the Child is already law in 107 countries, and that more than 120 countries are now preparing national plans of action in response to the World Summit for Children. The challenge, he stressed, is not in gathering more statistics or passing more legislation but in translating existing policies into action. UNICEF supports many programmes to improve girls' education and has committed itself to raising its education budget from 8 per cent in 1991 to 25 per cent by the end of the decade — with special emphasis on girls.

NGOs attending the conference acknowledged the need for practical interventions that include: training female teachers; day-care centres for younger siblings; gender-sensitive curricula and textbooks; mobile libraries; and water and sanitation improvements in the schools. At the same time, there was widespread agreement that achieving universal equal education for girls is a daunting and delicate process, that requires addressing complex and contradictory social forces and mobilizing the political and personal will of entire nations — from parents to governments.

This means encouraging fathers to assume a greater child-care role. It means honouring the role of mothers as conduits for values and traditions while at the same time broadening that role. It means developing single-sex and informal classrooms and schools, while working towards equalizing access to mainstream formal education. It means creating gender-sensitive attitudes, even "positive discrimination", in everything from textbooks and curricula to the parenting of very young children. It means NGOs finding non-threating and constructive ways to pressure governments to convert their own words to deeds.

For many NGOs, the well-known statistics are still not well-known enough. One participant said, if NGOs are to be successful advocates, helping to change attitudes, this information base must "expand like a spider's web, pulling in more and more people — parents, communities and governments everywhere."

As the world has seen a global revolution and shift of power from central governments to the people, nobody is better situated to participate in this revolution than the NGO community — with its decentralized, varied and independent voices.

UNICEF/5021C/ROMER

**An Ecuadorian child lives amid waterfront garbage. Thousands of children in the developing world spend their days like this. They personify the relationship connecting poverty, poor child health and environmental degradation.**

*Sara Ann Friedman is Editor of* ***NGO Action for Children.***

# *Standing up for children*

**continued from page 13**

ments, he added, "even those who supported us."

Linking the World Summit and the Convention on the Rights of the Child to other international documents is a constant mission of UNICEF and NGOs working on behalf of children. In keeping with this commitment, the adopted text urges that the goals of the Summit be readopted and endorsed in Rio, that governments which have not ratified the Convention do so, and that all governments implement the Convention to address basic needs of children in the environment and development area. The document emphasizes primary environmental care to address the basic needs of communities and improve the environment for children at the household and community level. It also urges an expansion of educational opportunities including education for environment and development with special attention given to the education of the girl child.

Says Ritchie, "We are taking advantage of UNCED to link up issues and make one more plea to implement the goals of the World Summit and the Convention."

### ICN: Good Nutrition is a Family Affair

*"If you give a man a fish, you feed him for a day. If you teach him how to fish, he can feed himself for a lifetime."* This old Chinese proverb forms the heart of recent efforts by NGOs working in nutrition and with children to participate more directly in the first global International Conference on Nutrition (ICN) to be held in Rome, Italy, from 5 to 11 December 1992. Sponsored by WHO and FAO, the conference will be the most important gathering of senior government officials to discuss nutrition since the 1974 World Food Conference. But the role of NGOs is not yet determined. UNICEF, while not a sponsor, has been involved in planning discussions at the global, regional and country level, and will present a paper on "Caring for the Socio-economically Deprived and Nutritionally Vulnerable".

Since the Conference was first announced, the NGO Committee on UNICEF has been seeking greater participation. NGOs are the ones who carry out the work at the grass-roots level, says Joanna Koch, from La Leche League and a member of the Geneva-based Ad Hoc Working Group on ICN. "If we are to implement the goals, we must be involved in the process of strategy and planning." The Ad Hoc Working Group is collaborating with the New York-based Nutrition Working Group of the NGO Committee on UNICEF to find ways to become more directly involved in the process and to bring children's interests to the forefront of the Conference.

The cooperation and collective action taken by NGOs in bringing about the Convention on the Rights of the Child could "show the same spirit and achieve the same results at the ICN," says Koch. "The Convention would never have happened without so many NGOs putting aside their own special interests."

Connecting the Convention and the Plan of Action of the World Summit for Children to nutrition, the environment and other issues is a major thrust of the NGO Committee on UNICEF. Moreover, says Beth Styer, chair of the Nutrition Working Group, nutrition is a complex chain that links food security to education, families to governments, and practice to attitudes. "People forget that good nutrition starts with the mother," she says. In many societies the mother feeds herself last and the men and boys first.

Good nutrition policy needs to begin at the family and community level where it can foster good prenatal care and work to win support of fathers who control household security. It can also promote simple and low-cost practices like home gardening and help change attitudes that perpetuate such nutritional taboos as the belief that colostrum, the first breast milk after birth, is unclean and therefore harmful to babies. UNICEF and some NGOs also feel that recent initiatives on the control of micronutrient malnutrition and the baby-friendly hospital initiative (BFHI) should be fully incorporated into the agenda.

MOTHERS AND CHILDREN

**A mother's nutrition affects the health of her unborn child.**

The NGO Committee on UNICEF sees the ICN Prepcom, to be held in Geneva on 18 to 25 August, as the best opportunity to voice its collective concerns by presenting a statement, and urges other NGOs to become a part of this process. "As we plan for the nutrition policies and programmes in this last decade of the century, it is vital that NGOs concerned with nutrition voice their priorities so the needs of women and children are not overlooked."

NGOs who want more information about the NGO initiative should contact: Nutrition Working Group, NGO Committee on UNICEF, H-6F, 3 UN Plaza, New York, NY 10017. Or: Joanna Koch, Ad Hoc Working Group on the ICN, UNICEF Office, Palais des Nations, CH-1211 Geneva 10, Switzerland.

NGOs wishing to attend the ICN as observers should contact: FAO/WHO Joint Secretariat, ICN, Via della Termi di Caracalla, 00100 Rome, Italy, fax: 39-6-5797-6661. Or: Ms. Timmie Jensen, FAO/ICN, 1001 22nd Street, NW, Washington, DC 20437, tel: 202-553-2452.

# RESOURCES

**UNICEF Publications**
Available for sale from UNICEF
RPPL, H-12G
3 UN Plaza
New York, NY 10017, USA.
Available in English unless otherwise noted.

*Environment, Development and the Child*. UNICEF New York, 1992. 88 p. US$9.95.

*UNICEF's response to the Jomtien challenge*. UNICEF New York, 1992. 24 p.

*Strategies to promote girls' education — policies and programmes that work*. UNICEF New York, 1992. 94 p. US$9.95.

The following newsletters, supported by UNICEF, are available without charge from your nearest UNICEF office, or from UNICEF, H-9F at the above address:

*BFHI News*. Monthly newsletter on the Baby-Friendly Hospital Initiative.

*The Coordinators' Notebook, An International Resource for Early Childhood Development*. Biannual newsletter.

*Countdown. (UNICEF/Dracunculiasis Operations Research Network)*. Quarterly newsletter to exchange operational experience on *dracunculiasis* (guinea worm) eradication. Also in French.

*One in Ten*. A Rehabilitation International/UNICEF Technical Support Programme to prevent childhood disabilities and to help disabled children. Periodic newsletter. Also in Arabic, French, Spanish.

*The Prescriber: Guidelines on the Rational Use of Drugs in Basic Health Services*. Quarterly newsletter. Also available in French, Portuguese and Spanish will follow.

*WATERfront*. Biannual newsletter on water and sanitation issues.

The following publications are available from the UNICEF International Child Development Centre, Spedale degli Innocenti, Piazza SS Annunziata 12, 50122 Florence, Italy:

**Innocenti Essay**
*Children's Participation: From Tokenism to Citizenship*, by Roger Hart. US$4.

**Innocenti Occasional Papers**
*The Disadvantaged Urban Child in India*, by A.B. Bose. January 1992. US$6.

*Child Welfare and the Socialist Experiment: Social and Economic Trends in the USSR, 1960-90*, by Alexander Riazantsev, Sandor Sipos and Oleg Labetsky. February 1992. US$6.

**Other Publications**
*The Family*. Trimonthly International Year of the Family bulletin. IYF Secretariat, UNOV/CSDHA, P.O. Box 500, A-1400 Vienna, Austria.

*Child Asia*. Bimonthly newsletter, published by the Foundation for Children, 185/16 Soi Wat Deeduad, Charan Sanit Wong 12, Bangkok-Yai, Thailand. Subscriptions US$10.00 for Asia; US$12.00 elsewhere.

**UNICEF Videos**
A number of audiovisual materials are available from UNICEF offices and National Committees. (Check with your local office for other titles.)

*The Bamako Initiative in Action*. 35 minutes. Video. Community health care in Guinea, Kenya and Senegal. English only, but French, Portuguese and Spanish will follow. (No. 256)

*Breastfeeding — A Global Priority*. 30 minutes. Video. Also in French and Spanish. 1990. (No. 238)

*Hadlok*. 27.30 minutes. Video. How children are affected by armed conflict in the Philippines. (No. 269)

**UN Videos**
Available from United Nations Publications Sales Section, Room DC2-853, New York, NY 10017, USA. (Please supply UN order number and ISBN when ordering.)

**About the United Nations**
(Seven individual videos plus teaching guides for use with young people. Each runs 20-30 minutes. US$29.95 per video plus US$3.50 handling):

*Human Rights* (Convention on Rights of the Child). E.91.1.40. ISBN 92-1-100460-8.

*Peace-keeping*. E.91.1.27. ISBN 92-1-100419-5.

*Palestine*. E.91.1.30. ISBN 92-1-100477-2.

*Africa Recovery*. E.91.1.33. ISBN 92-1-100476-4.

*Literacy*. E.91.1.36. ISBN 92-1-100461-6.

*Environment and Development*. E.92.1.9. ISBN 92-1-100474-8.

*Decolonization*. E.92.1.11. ISBN 92-1-100475-6.

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**Resources** *is compiled by Rhonwen Searle, Senior Information Assistant.*


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Editor: *Patricia Lone*

Please address all correspondence to: *First Call for Children*, UNICEF, 3 UN Plaza, H-9F, New York, NY 10017, USA. Fax (212)326-7768, Telex 175989.

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